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# The Plays of Eugene O'Neill: A Psychological Analysis.

Vera Theresa Hahn

*Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College*

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**THE PLAYS OF EUGENE O'NEILL: A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS**

**A Dissertation**

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**in**

**The Department of English**

**By**

**Vera Theresa Hahn**

**B. A., Stanford University, 1930**

**M. A., Stanford University, 1931**

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## ABSTRACT

Eugene O'Neill a number of years ago was proclaimed by leading critics America's foremost dramatist--a title which remains undisputed today. It is further said of him that he gives an accurate picture of man standing against the unsympathetic, mechanized background of the present. It is a period of chaos, which has discarded old ideals and which puts a strain on man in his effort to adjust himself to rapidly changing conditions. According to the deterministic philosophy of the day, man is a product of his environment. He must of necessity, then, be a highly complex creature who seeks with difficulty a goal firm enough to insure for him an integrated personality. This is the man who lives and struggles and dies in the dramas of Eugene O'Neill. Does the dramatist analyze this man in relation to the psychology implied in the motives that direct his thoughts, emotions, and actions? This is the question for which an answer is sought in the present study.

A great many articles and also a number of books have been written on O'Neill's relation to many subjects, such as the sickness of today, religion, Greek drama, Strindberg, philosophy, ethics, social problems. Volumes have been written on his life and works, on his skill as a dramatist, on his poetic quest, and on his relation to the problems of modern industrialism. But nothing at all has been written on O'Neill, the psychologist. Certainly if O'Neill is rightfully to claim the title that is his, he must first be proved an unerring student in that field which deals with the problems of the human mind.

To obtain a working knowledge of the psychological theories that apply to this subject, I have read the works of special students like Freud, as well as those of general writers. The study covered the entire field of psychology, abnormal and adolescent as well as general. I have also read general criticisms of O'Neill, literary and technical. Next I investigated O'Neill's letters and recorded conversations in my endeavor to gain a more intimate understanding of the dramatist. Finally, after reading the plays, I made a careful analysis of the thoughts, emotions, and actions of the characters in relation to the schools of psychology that were involved. It was this analysis in relation to the thought of modern psychology that led to the actual conclusions.

The conclusions reached at the close of this study were satisfying as well as illuminating. If psychology has succeeded in explaining the processes of the human mind, O'Neill is both detailed and accurate in his representation of character, for he observes the principles of human behavior set forth by this science.

It is amazing to note the number and variety of the psychological situations developed by the dramatist. In the plays are found studies in suppression, regression, compulsion, repression, obsession, identification, sublimation, paranoia, dissociation, complexes, such as the Oedipus, Electra, and Narcissus, adolescent fixations, delusion, hallucination, dreams, and trauma; studies in many different kinds of goals or life-plans, such as pride, hatred, gold, power, land; studies in the rôle played by the sex instinct, illusions, and the desire for superiority; and finally studies in character types, such as schizoid, introvert, emotional introvert, extrovert, and subjective extrovert. The careful analysis of such situations at these points conclusively to

O'Neill's wide knowledge of psychology. The citations taken from the texts of eminent thinkers are intended to strengthen O'Neill's authority as a psychologist; in no sense is it to be inferred that O'Neill actually consulted these authorities or that he even knew of them.

Finally this study points conclusively to the influence that leading figures in the field of psychoanalysis had on O'Neill at one time or another. Whether this influence was direct or indirect, conscious or unconscious, is of little consequence. After a careful analysis of the plays, there can remain little doubt that O'Neill was familiar with the dynamisms of Freud, that he had a knowledge of Adler's principle of the "will to power," or that he understood Jung's theory of the unconscious processes and of the collective psyche.

As an unerring analyst and interpreter of the man of today, in a rapidly shifting scene, Eugene O'Neill merits the fame and recognition that he has won.

# I

## INTRODUCTION

From the time that I read my first O'Neill play, I became interested in the amazing lifelikeness of the characters delineated there. This interest has never failed; as I read play after play I became more and more fascinated by the dramatist's conception of the intricacies of human nature. Finally I wanted to attempt a study of O'Neill's work in relation to modern psychology so that I might prove conclusively his authenticity as interpreter of the psyche. This study has become the object of this dissertation.

Books have been written on O'Neill as a creative artist, as interpreter of the modern world of today, and as a poet in quest of the inner significance of life. There is also an excellent volume by Barrett H. Clark treating of the life and works of O'Neill wherein are quoted many of the dramatist's conversations and letters. And there are numerous articles in magazines that discuss, among the subjects, O'Neill in relation to philosophy, religion, Greek drama, the influence of Strindberg. Nothing has been done, however, on that phase of O'Neill's work which to me seems of such vital interest.

If a dramatist is to be truly called an interpreter of the modern scene and an observer gifted with poetic insight that searches for the inner significance behind the mask, he must first of all be acclaimed an unerring student of human nature, for it is human beings that become the medium of his message, be it an objective picture of

life or a philosophical doctrine. The science of psychology is still in its infancy; different schools of thought arise and flourish side by side, but all the while a serious attempt is being made to unravel the perplexing network of the mind. In so far as a writer shows himself familiar with the laws which psychology has found to govern human behavior and applies them to the actions of his characters, he creates men and women reflective of the life of our day.

To see how carefully O'Neill understood the teachings of psychology and to what extent he applied its principles in making the motivation of his characters convincing, strange and implausible as it seems at times, is the problem with which I have concerned myself in this study. My work, once begun, led to many interesting byways, such as the differentiation between the schools of psychological thought and the distinct influence of each on the dramatist's work; the amazing number of psychological situations that the plays presented as well as their surprising variety; and the gradual development of O'Neill's psychological insight from the time that he was a mere novice to the moment when his position as the greatest literary interpreter of human nature was an established fact.

In order to arrive at a conclusion concerning O'Neill's understanding of human nature as based on the findings of accepted psychological teaching, I began my study by a careful reading of the works of outstanding exponents of psychological theories. This I followed by the reading of commentaries on these theorists and by further reading of psychology from the viewpoint of men who accept with caution the principles of a new science in order that integrity may mark its progress. My study included the fields of abnormal and adolescent psychology as well as the general field. I next investigated the books



and articles written on O'Neill, seeking to find therein material pertinent to my particular interest. Finally my study involved a careful analysis of the emotions and actions of the characters that appear in all of O'Neill's published plays. It was this analysis made in relation to the precepts of modern psychology that led me to my conclusions.

In this study I have not included synopses of the plays, except in the case of the early one-act plays where the brief situation itself often becomes the sole psychological idea. Elsewhere the story of the plays is wholly subordinated to the psychological interest that results from it. Nor have I attempted to discuss the philosophy and ethics found in the plays except in their relation to the theme as a whole. Moreover, I made no effort to evaluate what is popularly termed the "morality" of the plays. In no instance do I believe that O'Neill exploits evil for its own sake, for everywhere does he recognize its inherent destructiveness. His intense and passionate search for truth sees beauty in ugliness and triumph in defeat.

Life to O'Neill, the psychologist, is like a sonata where the same theme occurs repeatedly, each time to be developed somewhat differently; and then come other themes with secondary themes. At the end there is a perfect composition made up of the beautiful and discordant, the major and the minor, the triumphant and the hopeless. O'Neill analyzes this composition as would a musician, pointing out the major and minor themes, the harmonies and dissonances of life.

In the following pages I have made an effort to show with what psychological insight O'Neill leads his characters through the experiences and situations that confront them. As a result of this study, I find that he applies the principles of psychology in his treatment

of characters; that he analyzes correctly a large number of mental situations, a few of which are suppression, regression, compulsion, dissociation, fixation, rationalization, identification; that he is influenced to a considerable degree by Freud, Jung, and Adler; and that he gradually develops his skill in analysing human motives, influenced now by one school of thought, now by another.

V. T. H.

## II

### THE SEA PLAYS

In the fall and winter of 1913-1914, O'Neill wrote the one-act plays in the Thirst volume. The plays included in this earliest O'Neill publication are The Web, Thirst, Recklessness, Warnings, and Fog. These plays are all written in a melodramatic vein, depending upon the tricks of the theatre for their success. The style is rhetorical, violent, exaggerated, while only one, Fog, dips beneath the surface realism and points towards the spiritual depth which is the greatest characteristic of the O'Neill canon. The plays in this volume are now definitely repudiated by the author who will not permit a reprinting of any of them.

The earliest plays that acclaim O'Neill "our leading dramatist" are, admittedly, the sea plays. Early in 1919 The Moon of the Caribbees and Six Other Plays of the Sea was published in book form. Besides the play that gives its title to the volume, the collection includes Bound East for Cardiff, In the Zone, 'Ille, Where the Cross is Made, and The Rope. The first of these plays, Bound East for Cardiff, was written in the spring of 1914. In a letter to Richard Dana Skinner which established the chronology of his plays, O'Neill makes this comment by way of parenthesis about his first sea play: "Very important from my point of view. In it can be seen, or felt, the germ of the spirit, life-attitude, etc., of all my more important future work. It was written before my work under Prof. Baker at Harvard" (Eugene O'Neill, p. viii).

This "germ of the spirit" to which O'Neill refers appears in the problem of the play, namely, in the universal question of death. And it is indeed true that this problem arises again and again as one major play after another reflects the development of the dramatist's life attitude. O'Neill time after time presents death, not as the inevitable end of man, but as a symbol for a greater life. Death to the self becomes a spiritual process wherein an affirmation of life grows out of the very act of dying. Juan Ponce de Leon and Lazarus are only two of the many characters who, like Yank, see with clearer vision when "the fog's lifted."

The characters in Bound East for Cardiff are the same ones that appear in the other sea plays: Driscoll, the Irishman who is a born leader; Yank, a typical sailor, rough and powerful; Cocky, "the wizened runt"; Olson, the Swede; Skitty, a refined Englishman who obviously does not "belong"; Ivan, the stupid-faced Russian; and several others. It is only Yank and Driscoll, however, who are clearly outlined in this first play, for the brief episode related here concerns them alone.

Yank is lying in his bunk mortally wounded from a fall while the S.S. Glencairn makes its way on a foggy night from London to Cardiff. Yank knows instinctively that he is dying. He is afraid to be left alone with the snoring men and the moaning fog whistle. He must have Driscoll with him, the one man whom he loves with a great overpowering affection. What goes on in the souls of these two men as they wait for death is the sole incident of the play. The episode is tense and moving and it is so without any of the "theatre" so necessary in Earnings and Recklessness.

Theme, situation, characterization, style—all these are important considerations in determining the merit of a dramatist. The sea plays

established a reputation for O'Neill. But had O'Neill not shown himself an apt observer of human psychology early in his career, it is doubtful that he would ever have been acclaimed "our leading dramatist." O'Neill's greatness as a dramatist lies in his understanding of the human soul as it is translated by modern psychology. The conflicts that he portrays are convincing because behind them lie motives which when analyzed satisfy the questioning of the mind. It is only gradually that O'Neill develops his skill as a psychologist, but already in these early one-act plays he indicates his interest in the workings of the human mind.

In Bound East for Cardiff the conflict centers about Yank and the sea. The sea has gained possession of him as it does of many another character in the O'Neill plays; or, if it is not the sea, it is some other force--the land, gold, desire for power, hatred, an unattainable ideal, or even a mad delusion. Often this possession is fought against, but as often does the character succumb to it. In either case there is a struggle, sometimes ending in victory, often in defeat. Never are the characters passive victims of this antagonistic force that rules their lives, and this is true in spite of the deterministic philosophy of the author.

The sea has been Yank's mistress, demanding his services and even his love, but it can not command his dreams. For Yank, as for many another human being, the dream serves as an escape mechanism. It is a well known psychological truth that whenever the realities of life become too distasteful the mind will seek compensation in dreams of an imaginary existence wherein the present discomforts have no part. Thus Yank, as he is dying, confesses his secret longing to Briscoe, never supposing that his friend has also been cherishing the same dream:

It must be great to stay on dry land all your life and have a farm with a house of your own with cows and pigs and chickens, 'way in the middle of the land where yuh'd never smell the sea or see a ship. It must be great to have a wife, and kids to play with at night after supper when your work was done. It must be great to have a home of your own, Drisc. ... Sea-farin' is all right when you're young and don't care, but we ain't chickens no more, and somehow, -I dunno, this last year has seemed rotten, and I've had a hunch I'd quit--with you, of course--and we'd save our coin, and go to Canada or Argentine or some place and git a farm, just a small one, just enough to live on. I never told yuh this, 'cause I thought you'd laugh at me.

DRISCOLL. Laugh at you, is ut? When I'm havin' the same thoughts myself, toime afther toime. It's a grand idea and we'll be doin' ut sure if you'll stop your crazy notions--about--about bein' so sick.

(pp. 236-237.)

The sea has enslaved Iank and now it will have his life, but it has never possessed his spirit. In his dying hour he dreams lovingly of a place far removed from the sight and sound of water. Death, in this instance, does not mean defeat, for the spirit has conquered a force that would enslave it and possess it as it did the weaker body. Bound East for Cardiff thus establishes a characteristic ending for most of the O'Neill tragedies, an ending which, though death triumphs, is a happy one.

What does O'Neill understand happiness to mean? Read what he says in the following passage (Clark, Jugene O'Neill, p. 149):

Exaltation; an intensified feeling of the significant worth of man's being and becoming? Well, if it means that--and not a mere smirking contentment with one's lot--I know there is more of it in one real tragedy than in all the happy-ending plays ever written. It's more present day judgment to think of tragedy as unhappy! The Greeks and the Elizabethans knew better. They felt the tremendous lift to it. It roused them spiritually to a deeper understanding of life. Through it they found release from the petty considerations of everyday existence. They saw their lives ennobled by it. A work of art is always happy; all else is unhappy ...

Wherever death is an affirmation of life there is no real tragedy; death to Yank meant a new voyage—one on which he had to ship alone, it is true, but one that led to a new discovery. Yank, then, is the first of the explorers who sees in death greater adventures on a higher sea. After him come Robert, Ponce de Leon, and Lazarus.

\* \* \* \*

During the winter of 1917, the next four sea plays were written—In the Zone, 'Ile, The Long Voyage Home, and Moon of the Caribbees. The note of triumph heard in Bound East for Cardiff is rarely sounded in these later plays. Here, for the most part, the minor chord of defeat predominates, which becomes the key for such major plays as "Marco Millions" and Diff'rent.

In the Zone differs considerably from Bound East for Cardiff and from the other plays in the little volume. It is a sentimental drama where soft-heartedness, pity, and romance are rather obvious. Though O'Neill condemned the play as being too conventional, too full of theatrical tricks, and too lacking in all spiritual import, it yet has a place in a study which endeavors to trace in these early one-act plays O'Neill's first efforts with psychological situations.

The episode takes place on board the tramp steamer S.S. Glencairn in the year 1916, at midnight, just after the ship has entered the submarine zone. Smitty has been acting suspiciously; he was found concealing a black box under his mattress when he believed himself to be unobserved, and somehow Smitty is different—he does not quite "belong" with his fine English and his cultured<sup>ed</sup> manners. Consequently, he is taken for a German spy. Thinking that the box is a torpedo or some other deadly instrument of war, the men dump it in a pail of water and then open it. Smitty, caught and bound to his bunk, protests in

an agony of mental torment when they take from the box a bunch of letters, letters from the girl he has been engaged to. As Driscoll reads the letters aloud, the brief tragedy is revealed: Smitty has lost the girl he loves because he drank, and in desperation he then went off to sea. As the story unfolds, the men are ashamed of their action and release Smitty in silence.

The conflict that must have raged in Smitty's soul when he had to decide between his love for the girl and his passion for drink is suggested in the final letter that Driscoll reads in his labored, halting manner, while spasmodic sobs of anguish come from the bound figure on the bunk:

... Ut is only from your chance meetin' with Harry--whin you were drunk--that I happen to know where to reach you. So you have run away to sea looks the coward you are because you knew I had found out the truth--the truth you have covered over with your mean little lies all the time I was away in Berlin and blindly trusted you. Very well, you have chosen. You have shown that your drunkenness means more to you than any love or faith av mine. I am sorry--for I loved you, Sidney Davidson--but this is the end. I love you--the man'ries; an' if ut is any satisfaction to you I love you the real-i-zation that you have wrecked my loife as you have wrecked your own ...

(pp. 293-294.)

The odds were too overwhelming and Smitty lost his chance for happiness. Though the play ends in tragedy, it does not end in defeat. Like Yank who had the courage to face death because he knew "that whatever it is that comes after it can't be no worsen'n this," Smitty now finds the courage to face life even though, as he says in Moon of the Caribbees, he is "damned from here to eternity."

Yank and Smitty, though they are but shadows compared to the dynamic personalities that follow in the later plays, sound the key of courage that makes the O'Neill characters splendid in their grim



defiance of forces over which they have no control. Though Captain Bartlett sacrificed everything to hold to a mad, unbelievable dream, though prison doors awaited Abbie and Eben for the crime of which they were guilty, though Jim Harris at last gave up the struggle that set him apart from other negroes, and though the Hairy Ape sought vainly for the place in which he "belonged," there is something glorious in the spirit of their defiance that speaks of victory in the very face of their defeat. The greatness of the human spirit in its rebellion against unmountable obstacles establishes an affirmation of the soul which takes no account of temporal failure. In their supreme courage, the characters of O'Neill may rightly stand by those of Shakespeare.

\* \* \* \*

File, the third play in order of composition, stands apart from the first two in that it is a play of sheer defeat. The psychological import of the play is, however, more striking and leads directly to many another play wherein the situations become more complex.

Captain Keeney keeps his whaling vessel in the Arctic over two years because his pride will not let him return to meet the sneers of his rivals without a full cargo of oil. This time the captain took with him his wife, a home-loving person who had romantic ideas concerning the sea. The vast loneliness of the great north seas frozen over with ice is gradually causing her to lose her mind. Even this sad sight will not persuade Keeney to turn back. His men mutiny but he succeeds in mastering them. Grimly he waits for the ice to break. Finally his wife's desperate appeals to his love make him waver in his purpose. But at the very moment when he is to give the order to return, the ice breaks and a whole school of whales appears out in the open water. The temptation is too great. Captain Keeney orders the

ship north instead of south while his wife, unable to withstand her disappointment, loses her mind.

Here O'Neill portrays a man who is in the grip of an irresistible passion. Captain Keeney has been singularly successful in his whaling expeditions. His goal of superiority was reached early in life, and since that time it has been his pride to maintain his reputation. Now comes a time when his superior qualities as a whaling skipper are to be tested. To his first mate he says:

It ain't the money what's keepin' me up in the Northern seas, Tom. But I can't go back to Homeport with a measly four hundred barrel of 'ile. I'd die fust. I ain't never come back home in all my days without a full ship. Ain't that truth?

Secretly he continues when Tom reminds him that he is icebound:

And d' you s'pose any of 'em would believe that—any o' them skippers I've beaten voyage after voyage? Can't you hear 'em laughin' and sneerin'—Tibbets 'n' Harris 'n' Simms and the rest—and all o' Homeport makin' fun o' me? "Dave Keeney what boasts he's the best whalin' skipper out o' Homeport comin' back with a measly four hundred barrel of 'ile?" ...

(p. 308.)

Captain Keeney is dominated by an unconquerable pride growing out of a sense of superiority that made his life satisfying to him. His character is strongly integrated, for all his sentiments were directed by a definite life-plan that enthroned the ideal of self-regard above all else.

But there comes a time when the captain's character is about to undergo disintegration. Another goal has been set up, and certain of his sentiments direct themselves to it, thus weakening the older goal of self-regard. This second goal is symbolized in his love for his wife. The two goals now cause a conflict, each demanding the superior position. Frantically Annie begs her husband to turn back and stub-

bornly the captain fights for his pride. Begging her to understand, he says:

You see—I've always done it—since my first voyage as skipper. I always come back—with a full ship—and—it don't seem right not to—somehow. I been always first whalin' skipper out o' Homeport, and— Don't you see my meanin', Annie?

(p. 514.)

But Annie pleads passionately and pathetically calls upon his love to save her. His face betrays the struggle going on within him. His shoulders sag, he becomes old, his iron spirit weakens as he looks at her tear-stained face. Dragging out the words, he says, "I'll do it, Annie—for your sake—if you say it's needful for ye."

At that moment comes the cry that the ice has broken and that there is a school of whales ahead. The trial of the man's character is tested to the limit; his wife's happiness and sanity are pitted against his pride. Because of what he is, he makes his decision. He loves his wife more than his oil, but the life-plan that has enshrined the sentiment of self-regard is powerful enough to demand that he reassure his superiority even at the cost of his wife's sanity. To her imploring cry he sternly answers, "Woman, you ain't adoin' right when you meddle in men's business and weaken 'em. You can't know my feelin's. I got to prove a man to be a good husband for ye to take pride in. I got to git the 'ile, I tell ye."

The Adlerian idea of "will to power" that interests O'Neill so strongly later on is manifested for the first time in this play which treats of a man's consuming desire to maintain his sense of superiority.

Obsessions of one kind or another dominate the lives of many an O'Neill character. As pride possessed Captain Keeney, so gold will rule the life of Captain Bartlett, and a rocky farm will mold the

character of Ephraim Cabot.

Mrs. Keeney like her husband presents the shadow of fuller figures carved in her image. She represents the dreamer who brings about tragedy through her faith in a false ideal. To her husband she says:

I used to dream of sailing on the great, wide, glorious ocean. I wanted to be by your side in the danger and vigorous life of it all. I wanted to see you the hero they make you out to be in Hometown. And instead-- All I find is ice and cold--and brutality! ... Oh, I know it isn't your fault, David. You see, I didn't believe you. I guess I was dreaming about the old Vikings in the story-books and I thought you were one of them.

(p. 312.)

Even as she analyses her false ideals, she still believes in them. Reality for her is something ugly; her husband appears a brute instead of the Viking of her dreams. Like Chris and Nat who later idealize Anna, Mrs. Keeney can not accept her husband as he is; he must conform to an impossible ideal. Disaster can only overtake those who live by false illusions. Mrs. Keeney and Robert, Chris and Juan all belong to that same family of romantic dreamers.

\* \* \* \*

The Long Voyage Home again concerns the crew of the S.S. Glencairn. The steamer has reached London where the men have just been paid off. The scene is the bar of a "low dive on the London waterfront." Olson the Swede, having saved his money for two years, refuses to drink. For a long time he has been planning to go home and live on the farm, but as soon as pay day would come he would squander his money and again his dream would be frustrated. Now it seems that he is about to realize his cherished hope. But a force over which he has no control steps in and plays a trick on Ollie. He is drugged, robbed, and put on board a ship bound on a two years' voyage round the Horn.

While the incident is painful and even pathetic, it lacks the tragic spirit of 'Ile, for there is no actual struggle here as there was in the case of Captain Keeney. At the end of every voyage Olson's intentions have been good, but comradeship with his sailor friends which led to drunkenness and the usual type of celebrations was stronger than his will to overcome them. Each time he wanted to go home but each time he went back to sea instead. His life was made up of a desire to follow one course and of a compulsion to pursue another. Herein Olson is a typical O'Neill character, one who becomes a victim of circumstances over which he has no control. Olson, like Anna, like the Mannons, like Michael and many another, is what he is because of his environment and certain qualities inherent in his nature. Thus early O'Neill shows himself a determinist, accepting the same formula for character as stated by Freud and many another modern thinker.

However, this time the power to resist the usual temptations is strengthened in Olson by factors such as the age of his mother, his brother's offer to let him share the farm, and his own temporary disgust with the life of the sailor. These new forces are about to lead Ollie to achieve what before has been impossible. He says to one of the prostitutes in the "dive":

I write back always I come soon; and I mean all time to go back home at end of voyage. But I come ashore. I take one drink, I take many drinks, I get drunk, I spend all money, I have to ship away for other voyage. So dis time I say to myself: Don't drink one drink, Ollie, or, sure, you don't get home. And I want go home dis time. I feel homesick for farm and to see my people again. Just like little boy, I feel homesick. Dat's why I don't drink nothin' tonight but dis-- belly--wash! You know, Miss Freda, my Mother get very old, and I want see her. She might die and I would never--

(pp. 262-263.)

But again Olson is thwarted, this time by a force outside himself

and yet a force belonging to the environment of which he is a part. Instead of being a victim of himself, he becomes a victim of the saloon-keeper and his drug.

Whenever the sea proved too unpleasant, Ollie used the age old method of escape. Like Yank he dreamed of the farm, and as it appeared to Chris so it appeared to him—a panacea for all ills. Fondly Ollie dreams, "I have plenty money, now, I go back with two years' pay and buy more land yet; work on farm. No more sea, no more bum grub, no more storms—just nice work." One of the oldest laws of psychology recognizes that the human soul must have its dream; it is the escape mechanism whereby the thwarted spirit finds release.

\* \* \* \*

The Moon of the Caribbees is a play of atmosphere. What this play means to O'Neill is best stated in his own words (Clark, Eugene O'Neill, p. 82):

... The Moon of the Caribbees—(my favorite)—is distinctively my own. The spirit of the sea—a big thing—is in this latter play the hero ... The Moon [is] an attempt to achieve a higher plane of bigger, finer values ... Perhaps I can explain the nature of my feeling for the impelling, inscrutable forces behind life which it is my ambition to at least faintly shadow at their work in my plays.

O'Neill has thought of his situation and characters as a fleeting episode in a vast epic. The men and women are bare shadows that move against an overwhelming background of sea and loneliness and moonlight. There is hardly a story at all. Smitty speaks of his broken dreams while his mates carouse with native women. They are sordid and ugly against the brightness and cleanness of nature, while the one who stands apart from them represents a broken remnant of manhood "damned from here to eternity."

This is exactly the affect for which O'Neill was striving. In the same passage quoted above, he contrasts the Smitty in this play with the one who appeared in the earlier play, In the Zone. "Smitty in the stuffy, grease-paint atmosphere of In the Zone is magnified into a hero who attracts our sentimental sympathy. In The Moon, posed against a background of that beauty, sad because it is eternal, which is one of the revealing moods of the sea's truth, his silhouetted gestures of self-pity are reduced to their proper insignificance, his thin whine of weakness is lost in the silence which it was mean enough to disturb, we get the perspective to judge him--and the others--and we find his sentimental posing much more out of harmony with truth, much less in tune with beauty, than the honest vulgarity of his mates."

The affirmation of life, the acceptance of reality, this is to be the theme of the O'Neill dramas. Life is not free from ugliness, but he who meets it is happier than he who shuts it out and lives in a world of false illusions. There is hardly a play where this philosophy is not revealed again and again. It is not to be wondered, then, that O'Neill looked with fondness upon The Moon of the Caribbees, for here he has stated his theme for the first time.

\* \* \* \*

The Rope is the type of play O'Neill developed more fully in Diff'rent and in Desire Under the Stars. It deals with ugly, sordid characters who are almost grotesque in their meanness. Bentley is a disgusting, scripture-quoting miser who owns a farm on the shore of the sea. His son by a second marriage stole a hundred dollars from him and disappeared. The crazed old man has hung a rope with a noose at the end of it from the rafters in his barn. On this rope he says his son must hang himself when he returns. The son, a good-for-nothing loafer,

does return and, together with his sister and brother-in-law, plots to torture the old man until he reveals the place where his money is hidden. In the meantime the grandchild plays with the rope; it breaks and from its hidden end falls a sack of gold pieces. The child, who knows nothing of the value of money, takes the pretty pieces and throws them one by one into the sea.

As pride characterized Captain Keeney, so hate characterizes Bentley. The vicious old man is so depraved that he uses Christianity for no other purpose than a vehicle for his hate. "He will visit thine iniquity" is the preface to all his harangues. His goal in life has been the accumulation of money. The passion for gold was so strong and so all-important that the loss of only a hundred of his precious dollars was an experience so overwhelming that it succeeded in deranging his mind.

\* \* \* \*

The final play of the see series in order of composition is Where the Cross is Made. Since this play is analysed with the longer play, Gold, of which it is an abbreviated version, it will not be discussed here.

\* \* \* \*

He who is interested in studying the development of an author, either as a whole or in some particular phase, must of necessity concern himself with the early works, seeking to find therein some germ from which springs the complex organism that holds his admiration. From these early one-act plays it is impossible to foresee the heights to which O'Neill rises as a psychologist. Such plays as The Rope and Where the Cross is Made emphasize melodramatic action rather than human



motives; In the Zone places the interest in theatrical trickery rather than in the mental state of the victim; The Long Voyage Home and Round East for Cardiff stress the situation rather than the conflict. It is only in 'Xle where O'Neill, the psychologist, has his beginning, as it is in The Moon of the Caribbees where O'Neill, the philosopher, first states his theme.

### III

#### BEFORE BREAKFAST and THE DREAMY KID

In addition to the plays in the Thirst volume and The Moon of the Caribbees volume, there are two other one-act plays that should be mentioned—Before Breakfast and The Dreamy Kid.

Before Breakfast is a monologue in which the words of the one speaking actor skillfully suggest a complete drama as well as the personality of the actors that play therein. Mrs. Rowland is preparing breakfast in a dingy flat where she lives with her husband Alfred. She speaks to Alfred while he is shaving, telling of her struggle to maintain a livelihood while he, "the millionaire Rowland's only son, the Harvard graduate, the poet, the catch of the town," goes off drinking and playing with women. She taunts him about his new love affair with Helen, whom he has compromised. "Who is this Helen, anyway? One of those artists? Or does she write poetry, too? Her letter sounds that way. . . . Is she young and pretty? I was young and pretty, too, when you fooled me with your fine, poetic talk; but life with you would soon wear anyone down. What I've been through!" And continuing with the Helen theme, she adds, "I'm not so sorry for her after all. She knew what she was doing. She isn't any school-girl, like I was, from the looks of her letter. Does she know you're married? Of course, she must. All your friends know about your unhappy marriage. I know they pity you but they don't know my side of it." After declaring she will never give him a divorce, she finishes by saying, "I'll tell you what I think; I think your Helen is no better than a common streetwalker,

that's what I think." There is a stifled groan of pain from the next room. Silence—then the drip, drip of something in the adjoining room. Alfred has cut his throat with a razor.

This brief sketch suggests much that later becomes the major theme of longer plays. Here one finds the same clash of personalities that makes tragedy inevitable in such plays as Beyond the Horizon and The Great God Brown. One sees the agony of a poet made to live out his life in an unsympathetic environment just as Robert and Dion are made to do. And one looks with pity upon an introvert who can not adjust himself to new situations, and who in the end is too weak to resist the temptation that points to release.

\* \* \* \*

The last of O'Neill's one-act plays, The Dreamy Kid, is a melodramatic episode in the life of a negro family. The Dreamy Kid is guilty of murder. In spite of the police who search for him, he makes his way home to see his dying grandmother. The situation becomes tense when the old woman unaware of what is happening to the boy whom she idolizes, begs him to remain with her. Dreamy is torn between his love for the dying woman and his desire to save his life. The police come before the struggle in the boy's soul has been decided one way or another. Here again, as in the earlier plays, emphasis on melodramatic action spoils what might have been a dramatic mental situation with psychological import.

#### IV

#### BEYOND THE HORIZON

Beyond the Horizon is of interest not only because it is O'Neill's first successful full length play, but also because in it are vaguely stated many of the conflicts that in later plays become the subject of deep psychological interest and whose presentation designate O'Neill a psychologist of the first rank. Perhaps there is no one idea that has taken greater possession of the dramatist than that of the destructive nature of an illusion that leads man from the reality of life to the fantasy of dreams. Though he is a firm believer in the philosophy of life which takes reality for goal, a philosophy expressed most forcefully in Lazarus Laughed, his deep love for presenting psychological states makes him select most often for the characters of his plays those individuals who are victims of the very illusions he would deny.

In his discussion of The Straw, Barrett Clark, in Eugene O'Neill, The Man and His Plays (p. 101), writes:

Once again, as in Beyond the Horizon, the playwright shows his characters, basing their lives upon illusion. Sometimes this takes the form of a dream of beauty, sometimes it is love, sometimes physical passion. In the later plays we shall find Ponce de Leon in quest of the illusion of love and fame, Marco Polo after the illusion of power, Lazarus after a solution of the problem of the life everlasting, and Reuben Light in Dynamo after a religion that he can believe in; but always it is the quest that counts—the pursuit that never ends, the search for happiness, the hope for an ultimate meaning and justification of life.

Robert Mayo is an excellent example of one continually lured on

by one illusion after another. He is a dreamer who goes through life without seeing it; reality for him lies in what is beyond the horizon. "Out there," he says, "there's something calling me." His god leads toward Beauty which he expects to find in the far places that lie beyond the purple line of hills that shuts off his father's farm from the rest of the world. To his brother he says:

Supposing I was to tell you that it's just Beauty that's calling me, the beauty of the far off and unknown, the mystery and spell of the East which lures me in the books I've read, the need of freedom of the great wide spaces, the joy of wandering on and on—in quest of the secret which is hidden over there, beyond the horizon?

(I, I, p. 20.)

All his life he was a dreamer. He tells Ruth that the only happy moments he had as a child were those in which dreams came to him as he sat before the window looking out—dreams so wonderful that he would forget the pain he was in.

I liked to be all alone—those times. I got to know all the different kinds of sunsets by heart. And all those sunsets took place over there—beyond the horizon. So gradually I came to believe that all the wonders of the world happened on the other side of those hills. There was the home of the good fairies who performed beautiful miracles. I believed in fairies then. Perhaps I still do believe in them. Anyway, in those days they were real enough, and sometimes I could actually hear them calling to me to come out and play with them, dance with them down the road in the dusk in a game of hide-and-seek to find out where the sun was hiding himself. They sang their little songs to me, songs that told of all the wonderful things they had in their home on the other side of the hills; and they promised to show me all of them, if I'd only come, come! But I couldn't come then, and I used to cry sometimes and Ma would think I was in pain. That's why I'm going now, I suppose. For I can still hear them calling. But the horizon is as far away and as luring as ever.

(I, I, p. 26.)

And the horizon remains forever far away. Just as Robert is about to set off on a long sea voyage with his uncle Dick, his quest changes

to another goal. The desire to learn what lies beyond the boundary of the eye is exchanged for another dream. Robert confesses that his longing to go to sea is partly due to his unexpressed love for Ruth, whom he believes to be in love with Andrew.

This desire to escape is common to the characters of the O'Neill plays. Elen seeks escape for his sensitive soul by putting on the mask of a Hephiste; Curtis Jayson in "The First Man" would run from his sorrow by burying his soul in archeological research; Yank in The Hairy Ape flees from the thought that he does not "belong" to the arms of death itself; Ella seeks escape for her helplessness in the protecting love of the negro Jim; Darrell would hide from his passion by an attempt at study in Europe and later by experimenting at his biological station on a distant island; in Gourning Becomes Electra, every character endeavors to forget the agony of life in one manner or another—Christine through her love of Brant, Mannon by a futile attempt to begin a new life, Orin with his dream of the South Sea Islands where he would live alone with his mother, and Lavinia in contemplating marriage with Peter.

When Robert learns that Ruth loves him and not his brother, a new illusion comes to him. He is happy in a new dream. He says hopefully, "Perhaps after all Andy was right—righter than he knew—when he said I could find all the things I was seeking for here, at home on the farm. I think love must have been the secret—the secret that called to me from over the world's rim—the secret beyond every horizon; and when I did not come, it came to me. Oh, Ruth, our love is a sweeter thing than any distant dream!" But this dream, too, proves futile and shadowy. Because he believes that love will answer every need of life, bitter tragedy follows.

The action of the story is swift and certain. Robert remains at home while Andrew who now seeks escape, goes with Uncle Dick. After the father dies, mostly through disappointment brought about by his capable son's flight from the homestead, Robert becomes manager of the farm. In his helpless, irresolute hands it soon falls into decay and ruin. Ruth long ago has discovered that it is Andrew whom she loves. In bitter anger she tells Robert the truth. Andrew returns from the voyage completely cured of his love for Ruth and soon departs again for Argentina. Robert, left in poverty and suffering from Ruth's hatred, soon falls a victim to tuberculosis. At this point another dream comes to bring him fleeting happiness.

Robert, sick as he is, sees an escape by hoping for a new life in the city with Ruth. Joyously he says to her,

I feel completely well, really I do—now that I can hope again, oh if you knew how glorious it feels to have something to look forward to! Can't you feel the thrill of it too—the vision of the new life opening up after the horrible years? ... Listen. All our suffering has been a test through which we had to pass to prove ourselves worthy of a finer realization. (Smilingly) And we did pass through it! It hasn't broken us! And now the dream is to come true!

(III, 1, pp. 104-105.)

Idealist that he is, he believes the universe will compensate him for his sufferings. But this illusion melts with the same disaster as all the others. He realizes that his life will soon be over, and that death is waiting.

But there is to be one more dream, and of this he will not be cheated. Dragging himself out of the house and into the open field where he can see his beloved hills and sky, he says triumphantly:

It's too late—for this life—but— ... Don't you see I'm happy at last—free—free!—freed from the farm—free to wander on and on—eternally! Look! Isn't it beautiful beyond the hills?

I can hear the old voices calling me to cease—  
 And this time I'm going! It isn't the end.  
 It's a free beginning—the start of my voyage!  
 I've won to my trip—the right of release—  
 beyond the horizon!

(III, 2, pp. 126-127.)

Robert's life, like many another found in the dramas of O'Neill, shows the futility of illusions and the tragic end destined to all who follow the beckoning of these evanescent enchantresses. Robert's tragedy is the tragedy of Eileen in The Straw, of Captain Bartlett in Gold, of Reuben in Dynasty, of Dion in The Great God Brown, and of still other characters who seek to realize the dream rather than to live the reality of which they are a part.

\* \* \* \*

The clashing natures of the two brothers represent the conflict between the two broad types of characters, the extrovert and the introvert. In the dramas of O'Neill, there are many Andrews and many Roberts—some of them simple types following the broad outline of Jung, others complicated types suggesting the more detailed patterns of Dr. Beatrice Winkler (The Re-Creating of the Individual, p. 172)—types designated as subjective extrovert, objective extrovert, emotional introvert, and objective introvert. Andrew has a long line of descendants ranging from the objective extrovert in Marco Polo, through the simple extroverts in Abbie Patnam and William Brown, to the subjective extrovert in Nina Leeds. The psychological types that follow Robert's nature include such characters as Kublai, the pure type of introvert; Dion Anthony and John Loving, the objective introverts; and Charlie Marsden, the emotional introvert.

This distinction between psychological types has interested psychologists from the beginning. William James differentiated the two



types as the "tough-minded" and the "tender-minded," Jung called them the "extrovert" and the "introvert," and two men at Yale, Raymond Dodge and Eugen Kahn, apply the terms "environment-type" and "ego-type" (The Craving for Superiority, p. 19). Dr. Jung in his original paper referred to two types only, which, according to the primary movement of the libido toward the center, i.e., the ego, or toward the periphery, i.e., the object, he designated the introvert and the extrovert, but he suggested that there might be other types yet to be defined. Later on Jung issued a book called Psychological Types which expresses his latest findings on the subject. His classification is now based on the psychic functions used by the individuals in their adaptation. Thus he distinguishes four types, the thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuition types, differing according to whether they are extroverts or introverts (The Re-Creating of the Individual, p. 169). Dr. Beatrice Hinkle has continued Jung's earlier classification which was based on certain definite psychological mechanisms and has derived the aforementioned subdivisions of the broad extrovert and introvert types.

In his early play, O'Neill contents himself with drawing his characters in accordance to the simple types so well known to every one. The following description of an extrovert might well be that of Andreu. "The extrovert feels more at home in the external world; he has many interests and goes out to meet the object. He is immediately responsive to situations as they arise and he deals with the facts of life as they exist, rather than with theories about life as it should be. He is the natural fighting man who generally acts first and thinks afterwards, and he is at home in the tumult and struggle of life . . . His feelings are the immediate guide for his judgement and through their outgoing movement he comes into direct contact with

the object, so that his ego and his object become identified . . . Because there is no obstruction to the outflow of his libido he can meet without difficulty the movement and change of life as it arises. His comparatively successful management of external conditions and people is not due to any thought-out plan, but to his differentiated feeling for the situation, which becomes directly translatable into suitable action. . . The extrovert . . . generally gives an impression of assurance and superiority, even though this is not consciously realized or felt" (The Re-Creating of the Individual, pp. 178-179).

While Andrew is at home on the farm, he takes pride in making it "a first class farm with all the fixings," and his father knows that he will make it "one of the slickest, best-payin' farms in the state, too." When Andrew's environment is suddenly changed and he is forced to go to sea, he immediately adapts himself and becomes a successful sailor. In three years he becomes an officer, has learned to navigate a ship in the fiercest hurricane, and has made important contacts with men. Through friendship with one man, he has been induced to seek his fortune in the Argentine. It is now in Argentina where he becomes a great financial success in the wheat market. Country boy that he is, without a college education and without training in human relationships, he yet succeeds admirably among men in the complicated affairs that make him a figure on Wall Street. Andrew is considered a superior being though he never consciously feels superior.

Exactly the opposite type is found in Robert. Introvert that he is, he fits well Dr. Winkle's description of the type. "He is normally more interested in the inner life and the subjective values. . . His response to stimuli is indirect, through thought; the movement of the libido is centripetal, and his feelings and emotions are directed

inward instead of outward and tend toward the center instead of the periphery. This brings him in direct relation with the ego and, therefore, because his feelings remain with the ego and are separated from the object, he does not make the immediate and direct contact with the object that is made by the extrovert. . . . The uncertainty and slowness in action of the introvert can be explained by his lack of a feeling grasp of the object, his emotional response passing instantaneously into thinking about it and logical reasoning over the situation. His feeling is in relation to his own ego as object, which causes a division in his psychic processes. In other words, instead of the complete merging of the ego with the object, which takes place normally in the extrovert, there are two objects for the introvert, his own ego with the ideas it creates, and the external object. . . . His lack lies in the realm of feeling, which is unadapted and undeveloped in relation to the external irrational world, so that, whenever the changing conditions of life demand a quick valuation and readjustment, he is unable to meet it adequately. Because his feeling finds its object within, in the ego, and in the ideal world self-created, it is not actively responsive to the demands of the external world. . . . . . . The introvert's close association of feeling with the personal ego causes an intense self-awareness which, to the simple extrovert, is quite unknown; and this, together with the realization of his inadequacy and uncertainty towards the outside world produces a peculiar sense of inferiority which, however deeply hidden, is a fundamental characteristic of the introverted personality\* (pp. 182-183).

Robert's interest lies in inner values, in his dreams, his poetry, his sunsets. The success of the farm concerns him not at all. With him the farm is something wholly outside himself; he and the farm are

two different objects, and his feeling of necessity is directed towards himself. With Andrew the farm is his very being; his ego and the farm have become identified. When, after the death of his father the management of the farm falls on Robert's shoulders, it necessarily suffers, for Robert is not so constituted that he can direct his feeling to the external world. The sad state into which the farm falls and the poverty which he must endure through his inefficiency increase his misery, for here is absolute proof of his inferiority. His sense of inferiority is further augmented by Andrew's success and by Ruth's constant nagging. The external world is indeed too overpowering, and Robert gives up the struggle as he retreats more and more towards the inner sanctum where are born the dreams and illusions that make his life possible.

Great contrast is also found in the two brothers when their emotions are stirred by their love for Ruth. When Andrew learns that Ruth loves Robert, he is deeply wounded, and for a time his feeling turns inward where he broods over the painful situation. But his sorrow does not last long. On his return from the voyage he laughingly refers to his feeling for Ruth with the casual remark, "Why, I'd forgotten all about—that—before I'd been at sea six months." Here Andrew acts in harmony with the type of character he represents. Speaking of the rare occasions when the feeling of the extrovert turns inward towards the ego, Dr. Hinkle writes: " . . . this withdrawal rarely occurs excepting in response to a specific stimulus from without, a definite disappointment, a psychic blow, or an obstacle which seems insurmountable. . . , throwing him back into himself, and calling him away from the exclusive preoccupation with outer objects. But even here, following the mechanism of his type, which is to push away

all painful situations and unpleasant conditions as far from himself as possible, he turns from the disagreeable situation as rapidly as he can . . ." (pp. 176-177).

With the younger brother, the situation is quite different. Robert becomes distracted when he hears Ruth say that she has always loved Andrew. So deeply does he grieve over this and so impossible is it for him to rule it out of his consciousness, that the thought remains with him through the years, torturing him, feeding his already too keen sense of inferiority. He is as consistent with his psychological type as is Andrew, for "when a painful situation or difficulty in the external world arises for this type, instead of throwing it from him as quickly as possible, he takes it to himself and, holding it close, retires to brood and meditate over it" (The Re-Creating of the Individual, p. 177.)

Early in his career as dramatist, then, O'Neill proves himself well acquainted with the psychological types. This knowledge becomes all the more evident in the delineation of the complex human beings which people his later plays.

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The character of Ruth is of interest because her psychological constitution presages that of more powerful women characters in later plays, such as Desire Under the Elms and Strange Interlude. Her possessive nature, her desire to dominate the lives of others, is passed on to Abbie Putnam and Nina Leeds in whom the quality becomes intensified a hundredfold. The superiority for which Andrew strives unconsciously and towards which Robert makes a few feeble efforts hoping thereby to defeat his sense of inferiority, becomes the one definite goal in the life of Ruth. Adler's "will to power" is as clearly illustrated in her character as it is in that of "The Hairy

Ape" later on. The goal which motivates Ruth's life illustrates the superiority which Adler refers to when he says, "In his love he desires to experience his power over his partner" (Analytical Psychology, p. 7). It becomes the "life-plan" of this woman to dominate the life of the man who loves her and thus assert her superiority over him.

Fascinated by the dreams that come from Robert's poetic soul, she believes herself to be in love with him. She is jealous of the hold these visions have on him and is determined to break their spell. Knowing how Robert longs to set out on the voyage with his uncle, she yet begs him to remain:

You won't go away on the trip, will you, Rob?  
You'll tell them you can't go on account of me,  
won't you? You can't go now!

And when Robert still hesitates, she plays her winning card,

Oh, Rob! And you said—you loved me!  
(I, pp. 28-29.)

Ruth is the type of woman that kills the very thing she loves. It was his beautiful dreams that made Robert seem different and superior to Andrew and therefore more desirous to her; yet when they make him independent of her she is ready to crush them, for she would have Robert a reflection of herself. Like Margaret in The Great God Brown, she is wholly materialistic. The ritual of watching the evening star rise which Dion and Robert religiously observe is a thing foreign to the nature of women who can at such a time think only of the supper that is waiting.

Such a devotee of materialism can hardly find happiness in surroundings marked by poverty and decay. Robert's failure to manage the farm convinced Ruth that he no longer served as a foil for her superiority. In bitter disappointment at what is really her own destructive work, she now determines to dominate Andrew in the same manner that she

subjected the younger brother. But Andrew no longer loves her and succeeds in humiliating her before the very man she despises. Now that Ruth's superiority over Robert is destroyed in this manner and her power over Andrew wholly negative, her life becomes purposeless; the sustaining goal has been swept away; the life-plan becomes disfigured so that she can no longer recognize the original design. At the end of the play O'Neill describes her as standing beside Robert's body, gazing at Andrew "dully, with the sad humility of exhaustion, her mind already sinking back into that spent calm beyond the further troubling of any hope." These lines so pregnant with despair are repeated in a slightly altered manner at the close of another, greater tragedy--Mourning Becomes Electra.

In its relationship to the other plays, Beyond the Horizon is, in the words of Richard Skinner, "like the first full notes of a recurrent theme in a great symphony, or, rather, like the first notes of several recurrent themes which later repeat themselves in clearer and clearer form and cross each other, sometimes discordantly, sometimes in harmonious cadences" (Eugene O'Neill, A Post's Quest, p. 49).

## THE STRAW

In Beyond the Horizon O'Neill presented the tragedy of three people who failed because they could not understand each other; because, though their lives were to be lived out in close relationship, they refused to achieve a harmonious partnership; and because they could not find the secret that would have solved the problem of life for them all. Just as he lay dying, Robert made the great discovery. To his brother he said, "Only through contact with suffering, Andy, will you—awaken . . . only through sacrifice—the secret beyond there—." But the realization that mutual sacrifice might have saved both Ruth and himself came too late. Death, though it brought illumination, ironically prevented Robert from reshaping his life according to the new principle that it made clear to him.

It is this principle of sacrifice that Robert discovered too late that now is to guide the life of another character in a new play. The Straw, written in the same year as Beyond the Horizon, is in several ways a continuation or a sequel, rather, of the first play. It is a play simple in its characterization and theme as compared with the complex plays that follow it. Not until thirteen years later with the writing of Ah, Wilderness! does O'Neill again attempt a play so direct and simple in its affirmation of life. In The Straw one finds none of the complex psychology that characterizes the later plays, and therefore, from the standpoint of a study that treats of O'Neill and his understanding and application of the principles of modern psychology,



the play is unimportant.

Stephen Murray offers some interest in the rôle of a thwarted romanticist. Like Robert of Beyond the Horizon, he is a dreamy, subjective type of character that is given to thought rather than action. O'Neill describes him thus; he is a "tall, slender, rather unusual-looking fellow with a pale face, sunken under high cheek bones, lined about the eyes and mouth, jaded and worn for one still so young. His intelligent, large hazel eyes have a tired, dispirited expression in repose, but can quicken instantly with a concealment mechanism of mocking, careless humor whenever his inner privacy is threatened. . . . He is staring into the fire, dreaming, an open book lying unheeded on the arm of his chair." For him the newspaper job, which centered around the reporting of the trivial happenings of a small town, was as soul-cramping as was the farm for Robert. And like Robert he had his dreams—dreams in which he saw himself a great writer, but like the earlier introvert he lacked ability for action which would get him beyond his horizon to the realization of his goal.

But because Stephen begins to practice the life principle which Robert found too late, his life is saved from an equally tragic ending. In a tuberculosis sanitarium he finds, through his friendship with Eileen, not only release from his thwarted ability as a writer, but also life and finally love. Yet love, the thing that at last illuminates and gives purpose to his life, comes only after he has learned to sacrifice himself.

The story of the play is a simple one. At the sanitarium Eileen falls in love with Stephen, but he thinks of her only as a very dear friend. After three months he leaves, completely cured, to make his way as a writer, while Eileen, who helped him to his literary success,

remains. She, whose well-being depended wholly on him, now loses courage and becomes an incurable. Upon his return, it becomes more evident than ever to Eileen that Stephen does not love her. With all hope swept away, she eagerly waits for death. It is at this point that Stephen, through the suggestion of a nurse, tells her that he loves her and asks her to marry him. As he is acting out his part, the truth suddenly sweeps over him in "a passionate awakening—a revelation." But Stephen awakes too late. With his realization of his love for Eileen, he also realizes that she is doomed—that she must die. It is now that he grasps at the last straw. He tells her the saving lie that his own disease has returned, that he needs her as never before to save his life. Eileen becomes transfigured with love, and with motherly self-forgetfulness she says, as the curtain falls, "I'll have to look out for you, Stephen, won't I? From now on? And see that you rest so many hours—."

In this last respect, in the power and strength of an illusion, The Stray once more resembles Beyond the Horizon. The belief, though false, that Stephen needs her gives Eileen the courage to struggle once more for life. For Stephen, also, there comes a saving illusion. Though told that Eileen must die, he fiercely defies the nurse:

But we'll win together. We can! We must!  
 There are things doctors can't value—can't  
 know the strength of! (Exultantly) You'll  
 see! I'll make Eileen get well, I tell you!  
 Happiness will cure! Love is stronger than—  
 (He suddenly breaks down before the pitying  
 negative she can not keep from her eyes ...)  
 Oh, why did you give me a hopeless hope?

MISS GILPIN. Isn't all life just that—when you  
 think of it?

STEPHEN. ... How dare you use the word hopeless—  
 as if it were the last! Come now, confess,  
 damn it! There's always hope, isn't there?  
 What do you know? Can you say you know anything?

(III, 2, p. 242.)

The straw, feeble as it is, becomes a pillar of support when seen through the magnifying lenses of an illusion.

## VI

### GOLD and WHERE THE CROSS IS MADE

In GOLD—and in Where the Cross is Made, the shorter, one-act version of this same play—is found a study of insanity based on a delusion.

Captain Bartlett and his whaling crew, composed of Horne, the boatswain; Butler, the cook; Abel, the ship's boy; Cates; and Kanaka, a native, are wrecked on a coral island, barren except for a few stunted coco palms. Here, in this desolate place, they have been driven nearly mad by heat and thirst and hunger. Shortly before the action of the play begins, Kanaka discovered a half sunk boat not far from shore. Thinking there might be something to drink in it, he searched its contents only to find a box full of metal junk—bracelets, bands, and necklaces, made of brass and copper and set with imitation jewels. The captain, crazed and blinded by physical torture, sees in these worthless trinkets a treasure hoard—gold, heavy and solid, and emeralds and rubies, green and red. To deaden the awful suffering that they are enduring, they must have something to believe in—some assurance that this state of things will not last:

What's the lack of water amount to—when ye've  
gold before you? Gold! Enough of it is your  
share alone to buy ye rum, and wine, and women,  
too, for the rest o' your life!

(I, p. 65.)

A delusion may be defined in the conventional manner as being a false belief. Karl A. Menninger in The Human Mind (p. 243) adds that

the belief is not generally shared by those about one and resists all ordinary measures to correct it. Furthermore, he states that a delusion arises in order to make possible an adjustment of the person to otherwise unendurable tensions. "The ego thus makes an effort to alter reality in order to make it acceptable to itself."

Captain Bartlett is mad with thirst; he remembers also that he has just lost his ship and two years' work. This must be gold and these must be jewels that he sees before him, or he shall have to succumb to the forces that are driving out his reason. The delusion, then, is merciful; it makes life tolerable for him.

Delusions are of two kinds, says Professor McDougall (Outline of Abnormal Psychology, p. 225), the delusions of desire and the delusions of aversions. O'Neill presents a striking example of the former type. Bartlett declares;

I've been dreamin' o' this for years. I never gave a damn 'bout the oil—that's just trade—but I always hoped on some voyage I'd pick up ambergris—a whole lot of it—and that's worth gold!

(I, p. 64.)

All his life he believed that some day he would find the hidden treasure. As a boy he had romantic visions of searching some treasure island for the place where the cross appeared on some crude map. An old sailor had once shown him such a map, and he had always regretted not having sought out the treasure indicated there.

But here she be! Run right into it—without no map nor nothin'. Gold and diamonds and all—there they be in front of our eyes!

(I, p. 65.)

After the brief tragedy on the island which ended in the murder of Butler and Abel because they, being more sane, would not share the delusion; after a ship had been sighted which was to relieve the men

of their horrible plight; and after the treasure had been buried and a cross made to mark its hiding place, Bartlett, in an ecstatic vision, says:

Ye're safe now! No more whalin' on the dirty seas! Rest to home! Gold! I've been dreamin' of it all my life! ...lay safe, d'ye hear. For I'll be back for ye! Aye—in spite of hell I'll dig ye up again!

(I, p. 76.)

As one studies the development of the delusion in Bartlett, one again admires the psychological insight of O'Neill. Menninger says (The Human Mind, p. 247):

All delusions are to be regarded as dissociated fragments or systems of which the main consciousness is fully aware, but which it fails to recognize as such, and hence misunderstands, misinterprets, mislabels. ... Sometimes these fragments are split off because they represent unattainable wishes.

Bartlett knew, in spite of his desire to believe otherwise, that the box contained only tawdry ornaments. Gates had called the contents of the box junk, brass, and pieces of glass "not worth a damn" even after the captain had forced the man to admit that what he saw in the box was gold. This confused and bewildered him:

Queer! Queer! He threw it back as if 'twas a chunk of mud! He knew—and yet he said he didn't want it. Junk, he called it—and he knows it's gold! He said 'twas gold himself a second back. He's queer. Why would he say junk when he knows it's gold? D'ye think—he don't believe?

(I, p. 69.)

All too well Bartlett knew, even while crazed by thirst and heat, that Butler was right. And a year later, after his ship had sailed without him, the ship he had made ready with such care in preparation for the journey back to the island where he was to retrieve his treasure; after the tragic news of the ship's being sunk at sea; after the old man had really lost his reason—after all these events, the struggle

to believe that the hidden box contained gold and jewels still occupied his tortured mind. Speaking of Father to his son Mat, he says:

Believe? Aye, he wouldn't believe. Brass and junk, he said, not worth a damn—but in the end I made him own up 'twas gold. ... Ye don't believe either, do ye? —like him. But I'll show ye! I'll make ye own up as I made him!

(IV, p. 131.)

When Sue, his daughter, begs him to save Mat from insanity by admitting that the story of the treasure is all false, consciousness is almost ready to recognise the dissociated fragments, thus nearly ending the delusion. In wild grief Bartlett cries,

Confess—brass and junk—not worth a damn! (In frenzied protest) No! Ye lie!

(IV, p. 137.)

But a little later, at the desperate appeal of his daughter, he forces the sustaining lie out of his brain. Broken, but self-conquered, he looks gently and sanely at Mat:

No Mat. That be the lie I have been tellin' myself ever since. That cock—he said 'twas brass—but I'd been lookin' for ambergris—gold—the whole o' my life—and when we found the chest—I had to believe, I tell ye! I'd been dreamin' o' it all my days! But he said brass and junk, and told the boy—and I give the word to murder 'em both and cover 'em up with sand.

(IV, p. 141.)

All the while the consciousness was aware of this independent idea or system of thought, but it refused to recognize it, for it represented the unattainable. Finally, through sheer will power, the barriers separating the logic-tight compartments were broken down and the delusion ceased to exist.

Not only is a patient's mind in a state of dissociation during a delusion, but also his belief is wholly unaffected by demonstration of its impossibility. Dr. Bernard Hart, in The Psychology of Insanity

(pp. 56-57), writes;

He [the patient] understands perfectly each point of our reasoning, but its significance is not allowed to penetrate the compartment which contains his delusion; it glides off as water glides off a duck's back.

A few examples will suffice to show Bartlett's determination not to listen to reason. Nat has just returned from a visit to the men who reported the sinking of the Sarah Allen. He says to his father,

Listen. I've absolute proof the Sarah Allen is lost.

BARTLETT. (fiercely) Ye lie!

NAT. (curiously) Why do you say that? You know it's true. It's just that you won't believe.

(IV, p. 131.)

Again he insists,

She ain't lost, boy—not her. Don't heed them lies ye been hearin'. She's due now. I'll go up and look ...

(IV, p. 135.)

Here the dissociated system will not admit into its logic-tight compartment any illuminating ray of reason. Dr. Hart points out (Psychology of Insanity, p. 56) that when a dissociated system appears to the personality as a foreign body which has intruded itself into the mind, hallucinations often occur. Through means of the hallucinatory visions or voices, the dissociated system announces its existence to the personality.

Bartlett, in accordance with the laws of the disease from which he suffers, has both visual and auditory hallucinations. Again and again he sees the Sarah Allen coming into the port, giving the signal that he had commanded—a red and a green light at the main masthead. He has just seen this vision before he rushes down to his son where, transfixed by the ecstasy of a dream come true, he gasps;



They've lowered a boat--the three--Horne an'  
 Cates and Jimmy Kanaka. They're rowin' ashore.  
 Listen. I hear the oars in the locks. Listen!  
 (IV, p. 156.)

In the shorter version of the play, Where the Cross is Made, this scene is even more effective, for here Bartlett rushes to the door, opens it, and says,

Come in, lads, come in!--and welcome home!  
 (p. 172.)

as the forms of Horne, Cates, and Kanaka appear on the stage, their hair matted and twined with slimy strands of seaweed, their flesh in the green light suggesting decomposition, and their bodies swaying rhythmically as if to the pulse of the long swells of the deep sea.

Dissociation takes place, as has already been pointed out, because the mental processes were contradictory and incompatible, and the conflict between them has been avoided by dissociating one from the other. Bartlett knew the box did not contain treasure, and yet he was determined that his life dream of finding rich jewels and gold should now be realized. A conflict between reason and desire to believe was then inevitable; the mind was split between two irreconcilable opponents. The only method by which it could get rid of the unpleasant tension was by dissociation. It has also been shown that Bartlett refused to listen to any fact or idea which was incompatible with the complex, segregated in its logic-tight compartment. But this contact between the two opposing systems of ideas can rarely be avoided in so complete a manner as dissociation suggests, writes Dr. Hart (Psychology of Insanity, p. 84 ff.):

The opposing systems do come into contact, but only through a medium which so distorts the connecting processes that the real significance of the incompatible forces is concealed, and the mind fails to appreciate that any actual contra-

fiction is present. This distorting medium is provided by the mechanism of rationalisation. Rationalisation ... allows the mind to regard the facts incompatible with the complex in such a light that their incompatibility is more or less efficiently cloaked.

This mechanism of rationalisation is early at work in the mind of Bartlett. His hatred for Butler centers about the fact that the latter has called the treasure junk and thus contradicted the captain's cherished belief. A bit of rationalisation makes more conceivable the belief that the gems are genuine. Butler must have had some sinister purpose in mind which made him deny the true value of the treasure. Bartlett thinks aloud to Horne,

His eyes--It's somethin' he's got in his head--  
somethin' he's hidin'! His share--maybe he thinks  
he'll get his share anyway, in spite o' us! Maybe  
he thinks his share wouldn't be all he wants!  
Maybe he thinks we'll die o' hunger and thirst  
before we get picked up--and he'll live--and then--  
he'll come in for the whole chestful! (Suddenly  
springing to his feet in a rage) Hell's fire!  
That's it, bullies! That's his sneakin' plan!  
To watch us die--and steal it from us!

(I, p. 69.)

He gives still another interpretation to Butler's scorn of the gold as he talks to his son:

Even that thief o' a cook owned up 'twas gold.  
Then when I turned 'em loose, because he knowed  
he'd git no share, he shouted again: "Brass and  
junk. Not worth a damn."

(IV, p. 134.)

And once more he rationalizes, assuring himself of his desired conviction and also reassuring his conscience, troubled all too deeply, by the weight of the crime he is guilty of:

... That thief of a cook was thinkin' he'd tell the  
folks on the schooner and go shares with them--  
and leave us on the island to rot; or he was  
thinkin' he and the boy'd be able to come back  
and dig it up afore I could. We had to do  
somethin' quick to spile their plan afore the

schooner come. (In a tone of savage satisfaction) And so--though I spoke no word to him--Jimmy knifed 'em both and covered 'em up with sand. But I spoke no word, d'ye hear? Their deaths be on Jimmy's head alone.

(IV, p. 134.)

McDougall, in his Outlines to Abnormal Psychology (p. 338), says, "When a delusion becomes highly systematised it consists of a number of related beliefs, each of which contributes support or strength to the whole system." Bartlett, as he later admits, had Butler and Abel killed because they interfered with his desire to believe in the treasure. However, he forces himself to believe that he had no hand in the crime, that they lied about the gold in order to procure it for themselves, and that it was necessary that they be done away with in order to protect his own life and that of his men. These beliefs are marshalled together for the support of the delusion.

No where in this portrayal of one possessed of a delusion does O'Neill fail to give a picture which is not in accord with the psychological laws that govern the type of insanity which he wishes to present.

In Where the Cross is Made, the one-act version of Gold, the chief interest lies not in the father, but in the son. The conflict within the mind of Nat ensues from his determination not to lose his reason, as did his father, over the lure of the hidden box buried on the desert island. In the end he succumbs to his cherished dream, and the delusion becomes a fixed system in his life, bringing with it the same mad hallucinations, the same ungrounded faith, persisting in spite of reason, that were his father's whenever it was a question of the treasure buried "where the cross is made."

\* \* \* \*

The dream—and dreams frequently play a part in O'Neill's dramas—also claims the attention in Gold. A casual consideration of the dreams that torment Bartlett leads one to infer that by no means can they be interpreted as wish-fulfillment, or as of sexual significance, or as guardians of sleep. Nor can they, after Jung, be considered as compensatory in nature. However, Freud gives a special interpretation to wish-fulfillment when he applies the term to anxiety dreams. In Beyond the Pleasure Principle (p. 38) he says:

... for they [anxiety dreams] merely put in the place of the interdicted wish-fulfillment the punishment appropriate to it, and are thus the wish-fulfillment of the sense of guilt reacting on the condemned impulse.

After a closer observation of the dream fragments revealed, one is inclined to believe that O'Neill's dream psychology is in harmony with that of Freud. There is no accurate account given of any of the captain's dreams, but much of their nature is implied from the conversations concerning them carried on with Horne and later with Mrs. Bartlett. To Horne Bartlett confides,

That cook and that boy. They come to me. I'm gettin' to be afeered o' goin' to bed—

And a little later,

Aye, brass and junk, he said, the lyin' scum!  
That's what he keeps sayin' when I see him in  
sleep!

(II, p. 79.)

These nightmares reveal to Mrs. Bartlett that her husband is guilty of murder. When she confronts him with this horrible truth, he insists that he "spoke no word."

MRS. BARTLETT. That's what you kept repeatin' in your sleep, night after night that first week you was home, till I knew the truth, and could

hear no more. "I spoke no word!" you kept sayin',  
as if 'twas your own soul had you at the bar of  
judgement. And "That cook, he didn't believe  
'twas gold," you'd say, and curse him.

(II, p. 95.)

In place of a satisfying dream that would let him enjoy the  
imagined possession of the gold, his own soul, demanding punishment  
for the crime he had committed, had its wish fulfilled in the torture  
that tore at his heart when in sleep he realized that the jewels were  
not real and that he, though he "spoke not a word," was guilty of the  
murder of two fellow creatures. By this rather complex and questionable  
interpretation, the dreams of the captain are wish-fulfillments in  
accordance with the Freudian theory.

\* \* \* \*

Gold relates itself to Beyond the Horizon in so far as it also  
presents tragedy brought about by a man's faithlessness to the thing  
he once loved. Captain Bartlett had been a successful whaler, one who  
loved the sea and the rugged life it demanded, just as Andrew loved the  
land that by nature he was destined to make productive. Like Andrew,  
Bartlett was an extrovert born to cope successfully with realities, but  
he yielded gradually to a dream world where only the Roberts know how  
to live and yet maintain a balance. Bartlett, untrue to his realistic  
self, became the victim of a delusion which grew out of a dream world  
to which he did not belong.

## VII

### "ANNA CHRISTIE"

"Anna Christie" presents problems which interest the student of ethics rather than the student of psychology, for here it is a question of ethical standards rather than conflict arising from maladjustment of deep instinctive motives. What conflict there is in this drama centers about what each character desires and what he finally gets. Both Chris and Burke had set creeds concerning what was right and what was wrong. Their ethical standards were fixed—fixed according to the standards of a past age where ideas of good and evil were not relative, and where a double standard of morals was the accepted thing. Anna, to both Chris and Burke, represents the ideal goal which such a creed sets up for itself. When their ideal proves false, when they learn of Anna's past, their whole creed, which has seemed so well constructed, crumbles about them. A bitter conflict ensues in which their belief in their moral code for women is pitted against their love for Anna, a love which implies the acceptance of a new creed based on a relative conception of ethics, that is, a creed which takes into consideration that good and evil are not fixed quantities, that they must be re-adjusted to the problems of reality.

Anna, on the other hand, represents a believer in the relative acceptance of ethics. Bitter circumstances force her into the trade of prostitute. Such a life becomes hideous for her, for she is not a bad woman to begin with. After ten days on her father's coal barge, she experiences a spiritual cleansing effected by the fog and sea—

"It makes me feel clean—out here—'s if I'd taken a bath." With this new life come new ideals, for experience has taught her that the good is new for each new day. The evil of her past life is destroyed. New values have come to her through experience. She knows that life is made up of good and evil, of ever changing values, and since this is true, a life can not be measured by fixed standards of ethics. Anna's theory of ethics is based upon reality. She is no longer the prostitute; she says, "Being on the sea has changed me and made me feel different about things, 's if all I'd been through wasn't me and didn't count and was just like it never happened." Anna therefore believes she has a right to happiness, and, encouraged by her philosophy, she fights for it against the two men who are ruled by their preconceived ideas of right and wrong.

"Anna Christie", in addition to its interest as a study in ethics, presents certain philosophical ideas of no little interest. Anna, like most of O'Neill's characters, is what she is because of the social and biological forces that hold her in their grasp. O'Neill believes in determinism; heredity and environment are the two great tragic forces that determine the life and character of man. In agreement with Freud and Jung and many lesser psychologists, he believes that the personality is made up of a nucleus of physical and psychological potentialities, some of which are developed, depending upon such powerful influences as the parents, the reactions to brothers and sisters, the laws of society and economics, the accidents of life, both physical and mental, which include shocks of all kinds; in a word, the personality is determined by such heredity and environmental factors over which the individual has little control.

Anna reviews her past from a deterministic point of view:

It was one of them cousins that you think is such nice people—the youngest son—Paul—that started me wrong. It wasn't none of my fault. I hated him worse'n hell and he knew it. But he was big and strong... That was why I run away from the farm. That was what made me get a job as nurse girl in St. Paul. And you think that was a nice job for a girl, too, don't you? With all them nice inland fellers just looking for a chance to marry me, I s'pose. Marry me? What a chance! They wasn't looking for marrying. I'm owning up everything fare and square. I was caged in, I tell you—just like in jail—taking care of other people's kids—listening to 'em bawling and crying day and night—when I wanted to be out—and I was lonesome—lonesome as hell! So I give up, finally. What was the use? ... And who's to blame for it, me or you? (Addressing her father)... You—keeping me safe inland—I wasn't no nurse girl the last two years—I lied when I wrote you—I was in a house, that's what!—yes, that kind of a house—the kind sailors like you and Mat goes to in port—and your nice inland men, too—and all men, God damn 'em!—I hate 'em! Hate 'em!

(III, pp. 86-87.)

Environment turned the girl who had a normal desire for happiness into a prostitute, just as her innate sense of honesty prompted her to tell the truth about her past even though it threatened to make her lose her lover, Mat Burke, who, like her father, took the attitude of a moralist living in a world of ethical absolutes. Anna's character was determined by the intangible forces that ruled her life. Understanding this, she says to her father:

There ain't nothing to forgive, anyway. It ain't your fault, and it ain't mine, and it ain't his [Mat's] neither. We're all poor nats, and things happen, and we just get mixed in wrong, that's all.

(IV, pp. 97-98.)

Chris represents another school of philosophy. Chris is a fatalist, not a determinist. He believes there is an outside, supernatural force which has nothing to do with heredity and environment, with biological or social laws; which steps in and directs the major experiences of life. Like the determinist he believes that man is a



victim of circumstances over which he has no control, but these circumstances are prearranged by some power beyond the natural. With Chris this supernatural force is symbolized by "dat ole devil sea."

The sea has come to be an obsession with Chris. Herein lies one of the few points of psychological interest found in the play. To Chris the sea is a personified evil. When he sees that his daughter is fascinated by the sea, he says:

Ay tank Ay'm damn fool for bring you on voyage,  
Anna.

ANNA. You talk—suttu tonight yourself.  
You act's if you was scared something was going  
to happen.

CHRIS. Only God know dat, Anna.

ANNA. Then it'll be Cawd's will, like the preachers say—  
what does happen.

CHRIS. (starts to his feet in fierce protest) No! Dat  
ole devil, sea, she ain't God!

(II, p. 48.)

An obsession is defined by V. E. Fisher "as mental or implicit activity of a fairly specific nature which the individual recognizes to be irrational but over which he has little or no control" (An Introduction to Abnormal Psychology, p. 211). Chris knows perfectly well that it is not the fault of the sea that Mat Burke is making love to his daughter, and yet in spite of himself he shakes his fist at the sea and cries with bitter hatred, "Dat's your dirty trick, damn ole devil, you! But, py God, you don't do dat! Not while Ay'm living! No, py God, you don't!"

From the technical point of view, the obsession which is found in Chris's relation with the sea might well come under the third classification of this abnormality as outlined by Morton Prince (The Unconscious, chaps. XI, XII). Dr. Prince places in this third class

the true phobias and other personality disorders which are similar. In this type of obsession the individual is aware of the emotion which he expresses in his actions and is also cognizant of the situation or stimulus which arouses it. The stimulus, however, is not a rationally adequate cause of the emotion. In the above quotation Chris was well aware of his hatred of the sea and actually blamed it for the trouble he believed would follow Burke's arrival.

But the actual stimulus of Chris's hatred is not the sea at all. Chris really loves the sea; unconsciously he expresses this love when he says to Anna:

You don't know how nice it's on barge, Anna. Tug come and we got towed out on voyage—just water all round, and sun, and fresh air, and good grub for make you strong, healthy gel. You see many things you don't see before. You got moonlight at night, maybe; see steamer pass; see schooner make sail—see every'ang dat's pretty...

(I, p. 37.)

What lies behind Chris's hatred and fear of the sea is the real cause of his obsession. This cause is not difficult to find. O'Neill, admirable psychologist that he is, makes it clear that Chris's feeling toward the sea is based on his own guilt. When his daughter asks him why he never came home, he says sadly:

Ay don't know, Anna, why Ay never come home Sweden in old year. Ay want come home end of every voyage. Ay want see your mother, your two brothers before dey was drowned, you ven you was born—but—Ay—don't go. Ay sign on other ships—go South America, go Australia, go China, go every port all over world many times—but Ay never go aboard ship sail for Sweden. Ven Ay got money for pay passage home as passenger den—(He bows his head guiltily) Ay forget and Ay spend all money. Ven Ay tank again, it's too late. Ay don't know why but dat's way with most sailor feller, Anna. Dat old devil sea make dem crazy fools with her dirty tricks. It's so.

(I, p. 34.)

McDougall in considering the cause of an obsession states that he is wholeheartedly in accord with Dr. Stekel who makes the following generalization: "Every phobia is a punishment exacted by the consciousness of guilt" (Outline of Abnormal Psychology, p. 317). The sentiment of self-regard within Chris has sought to rid memory of the sense of guilt, of self-reproach which arose out of his neglect of his wife and children, and to set up some sort of rationalistic system whereby the blame might be placed elsewhere. The sea thus represents the man's guilt and also acts as the punishment for his own conscious guilt. To Chris the sea is the devil who comes to torment him for his past sins.

At the end of the drama the lovers are united and apparently all is well, but Chris knows better. There is always the sea, and the sea is full of "dirty tricks." His obsession will not leave him. As he looks out into the night, he murmurs, "Fog, fog, fog, all bloody time. You can't see where you was going, no. Only dat ole devil, sea--she knows!"

The character of Mat Burke also is of psychological interest. It has already been pointed out that Mat thought of Anna as an ideal, as a goal, as something quite perfect and beyond the reality of life with its pain and ugliness. She symbolized the good for him and therefore ennobled him because of his strivings toward that good. When he learns that Anna is a human being, guilty of the same sins that he is guilty of, he becomes outraged. His sense of superiority, which he rested, in part, on this chasing after so unattainable an ideal, has been injured; he is made to appear ridiculous in his own eyes as well as in those of the world. To Anna he shouts:

Though I do be thinking I'd have a good right  
to smash your skull like a rotten egg. Was

there iver a woman in the world had the rottenness in her that you have, and was there iver a man the like of me was made the fool of the world, and me thinking thoughts about you, and having great love for you, and dreaming dreams of the fine life we'd have when we'd be wedded! Yerra, God help me! I'm destroyed entirely and my heart is broken in bits! I'm asking God Himself, was it for this He'd have me reaming the earth since I was a lad only, to come to black shame in the end, where I'd be giving power of love to a woman is the same as others you'd meet in any hooker-shanty in port, with red gowns on them and paint on their grinning mugs, would be sleeping with any man for a dollar or two.

(III, p. 89.)

This speech makes Mat an excellent example of Adler's theory concerning the all importance of the goal of superiority which directs all mental attitudes as it does bodily activities (Individual Psychology, p. 8). Adler insists that the striving for power, which motivates every thought and action, carries within itself an ideal of perfection and infallibility. This ideal was fixed on Anna who for Mat represented the moral perfection he knew to be lacking in his own character. Through rationalization he was able to believe that his love of her reestablished the moral ideal in himself.

There is another psychological reason to be found in Mat's bitter condemnation of Anna. It is a well-known principle that the conscience is eased of a sin if that sin is found in another where it appears far more heinous. By such rationalization one can free himself of a sense of guilt, no matter how bitter it may appear before this process of reasoning takes place. Rationalization is defined by Menninger as a method of "explaining away plausibly, but without reference to the unconscious reasons, or without loyalty to all of the facts" (The Human Mind, p. 290). It is this practice that Mat follows. Anna says, "You been doing the same thing all your life, picking up a new girl in every port. How're you any better than I was?" Whereupon Mat evades

the question and challenges her again, "Is it no shame you have at all?"

In the end Mat forgives Anna, but only after she swears on his cross that he is the only man she ever loved, and that "she'll be forgetting all the badness she ever done and never do the like of it again." Mat's sense of superiority is now restored. He also begins to think of Anna as he would have her be, thus again setting her up as the ideal so necessary to his nature.

## VIII

### THE EMPEROR JONES

O'Neill has been criticised for being psychologically unsound in his portrayal of the terror and visions that appear in The Emperor Jones. A careful study of the play, on the contrary, shows the dramatist to be an exact and profound psychologist, who at the same time preserves the epic sweep and the dramatic quality of the fable.

The Emperor is an intelligent negro who, during his career of Pullman porter, learned the value of daring and bluff from the whites he served. In the course of time he became a thief, a murderer, and an escaped convict. Through contact with the white people, he acquired a veneer of civilization that gave him an ascendancy over the black tribe which, after his flight, he mastered on an island of the West Indies. Squabbles of discontent soon arose over the money he exacted from the natives--money that he safely stored in a bank to his own credit. A revolution was threatening. He had only to cross the plain, then the forest, and he would come in sight of the port which meant escape.

Relying on his own strength, he believed himself to be superior to superstition. But hunger and fatigue beset him, and as night came on terror entered his heart. Ghosts of his past victims appeared, and he also saw in visions the slave market, the slave ship, and the witch-doctor of earlier epochs. Within a few hours the brittle armor of civilization fell off, and he again became a primitive savage, as superstitious as the ones on the hill who were beating the tom-toms and

casting their spells in preparation for his death.

The dramatic interest centers not in this brief story but in the varying states of mind that are portrayed. Herein lies also the psychological interest of the play.

Fear, real fear in contrast to neurotic fear, seems quite rational and comprehensible. It is a reaction to the perception of external danger, to harm that is foreseen. It may be regarded as an expression of the instinct of self-preservation, for the flight reflex is involved. The situations and the objects that arouse fear depend upon the individual's knowledge and feeling of power over the outer world. When the negro realizes that he has been abandoned, when he hears the steady beat of the tom-tom, and when he strives to balance his power with that of the witch doctors over the savage minds, only to acknowledge his weakness in the face of their strength, his instinct of self-preservation demands his flight. Jones is certain of reaching the port in safety, and so at the outset of his flight he is not conscious of terror. However, when night comes on, when he is physically exhausted from the long journey across the plain, when he can not find the food he had hidden at the edge of the forest, and when he realizes that he must penetrate that wall of darkness from which comes the moan of the trade winds as it passes through the leaves of the dark pillars dimly outlined against an ever deeper blackness, fright begins to seize him.

This first stage of terror is artistically presented by the Little Formless Fears that creep out of the deeper blackness of the forest, black, shapeless things with little glittering eyes. From these formless creatures comes a tiny gale of low, mocking laughter, like the rustling of leaves. They squirm upward as Jones looks down, and with a yell of terror he jumps backward, pulling out his revolver as he does

so. In a quavering voice he demands:

What's dat? Who's dar? What is you? Git away  
from me bafu! I shoots you up! You don't? --  
(2, p. 52.)

He fires, there is a flash, a report, and the little creatures are gone.

Since this is the first of a series of hallucinations that are to follow, this mental phenomenon might well be considered here. Men formerly believed that illusions and hallucinations were provoked by morbid processes in the brain cells. Jung points out that such phenomena are not only in functional disturbances, but also in the case of normal people. In his chapter on "The Unconscious in Psychopathology" (Analytical Psychology, p. 252), he states:

Primitive people may have visions and hear strange voices without having their mental processes at all disturbed. To seek to ascribe symptoms of that nature directly to a disease of the brain calls I hold to be superficial and unwarranted. Hallucinations show very plainly how a part of the unconscious content can force itself across the threshold of the conscious.

The exhaustion, hunger, and fear have produced a condition of excitation from which results a great lack of harmony between the conscious and the unconscious attitudes. The unconscious soon intrudes itself violently upon the conscious processes. Then peculiar thoughts supervene and forms and sounds may appear that show the internal conflict. Jones has been consciously fighting his fear, pushing it back into the unconscious, but the struggle is an unequal one. Out of the unconscious comes the mocking laugh and the wriggling forms to declare the victory. The shot, the flash, brings back the supremacy of the conscious, and for a time the fear is again conquered, or pushed back into the unconscious.

The next hallucination centers about the negro Jeff who appears in a Pullman porter's uniform and cap. He is throwing a pair of dice on the ground before him, picking them up, shaking them, casting them out



with the mechanical movements of an automaton. A queer, clicking sound accompanies these actions. Jones comes out into the moonlit patch, then stops—worriedly,

What's dat odder queer clikety sound I heerd? Dere it is! Sound close! Sound like—sound like—Fo! God sake, sound like some nigger was shootin' craps! I better beat it quick when I get them notions.

He comes quickly into the cleared space—then stands transfixed as he sees Jeff.

Who dar? Who dat? Is dat you, Jeff? Jeff? I'm sho' mighty glad to see you! Dey tol' me you done died from dat razor cut I gives you. But how you come back, nigger? Ain't you gwine—look up—can't you speak to me? Is you—is you—a ha'mt?

In a frenzy of terrified rage he pulls out his revolver,

Nigger, I kills you dead once. Has I got to kill you ag'in? You take it den.

(3, pp. 34-35.)

Here the hallucination is an exact reproduction in vividness and detail of the original experience. Psychologists classify this as a certain type of memory phenomenon wherein wherein the one experiencing the vision not only remembers the experience but recognizes the connection between it and the hallucination. This type of hallucination is common, says Dr. Morton Prince in The Unconscious (reprinted in Outline of Abnormal Psychology, p. 201).

A more unusual type appears in Jones's next hallucination. A gang of negroes appear, dressed in striped convict suits, heads shaven, one leg dragging limply, shackled to a heavy ball and chain. Some carry picks, some shovels. They are followed by a white man dressed in the uniform of a prison guard. A rifle is slung across his shoulder and he carries a heavy whip. At a signal from the guard, the negroes stop on the side of the road opposite where Jones is sitting. As he sees

then his eyes pop, he tries to flee but is transfixed. The guard cracks his whip, the prisoners begin their mechanical shoveling, and Jones, getting to his feet, takes his place among the others. Suddenly the guard approaches him, raises his whip, and lashes viciously across the back. Jones winces with pain and covers objectly. Then, as the guard turns and walks away, Jones straightens up, and with arms upraised as though his shovel were a club, he springs murderously at the unsuspecting man. Realizing that he has no shovel, he cries despairingly:

Gimme a shovel, one o' you, fo' God's sake!

Then tugging at his revolver,

I kills you, you white debil, if it's de last thing  
I evah does! Ghost or debil, I kill you again!

(4, pp. 43-44.)

Here is found a reproduction in all its details of the content of the consciousness obtained at the time the murder actually occurred and also of the emotion and its physiological manifestations. All this was faithfully conserved in memory. Moreover, the events followed in chronological sequence as in the original experience. Describing a similar case which, however, took the form of a hypnotic dream in place of the hallucination that O'Neill has used for artistic purposes, Dr. Prince says in the above mentioned work (p. 200):

... the subject goes back to the time of the experience, which he thinks is the present, and actually lives over again the original episode. Unlike the conditions of ordinary memory the whole content of his consciousness is practically limited to that which originally was present, all else, the present and the intervening past, being dissociated and excluded. The original psychological processes and their psycho-physiological accompaniments (pain, paralysis, anesthesia, spasms, etc.) repeat themselves as if the present were the past.

Thus far the hallucinations have been based on some actual experience. The two that follow could not have come from the memory of what was once a part of Jones's life, and yet even here O'Neill is

consistent with the teaching of psychology. Dr. Prince in his account of the unconscious says that he has observed a reproduction of a forgotten experience that was not visual, that is, not an actual experience; but vicarious as it was, it was yet translated into a newly created visual representation (p. 202). Jones was not sold at a slave market; yet what happened there must have been well known to him through legend or fable. Neither was he one of a cargo of slaves; yet he must have heard of these naked savages, crumpled and desperate, as they sat swaying with the roll of the waves. The vision of the slave market that occurs in scene five and the one of the slave ship that is portrayed in scene six are, then, based on sound psychological principles, though outwardly they appear to be inserted merely for the sake of artistic embellishment or else solely for the purpose of showing the character's rapid regression back to savagery.

The final hallucination is the most interesting of them all from the psychological point of view. In scene seven Jones is shown before a rough stone altar. He passes his hand in bewilderment over his head; then, as if in obedience to some queer impulse, he sinks to a devote, kneeling position. Realizing what he is doing, he straightens up and stares about him horrifiedly:

What—what is I doin'? What—is—dis place?  
 Seems like I know dat tree—an' dem stones—  
 an' de river. I remember—seems like I been  
 heah befo'. Oh, Gorry, I'se skeered in dis  
 place! I'se skeered. Oh, Lawd, perfect dis  
 sinner!

(7, p. 46.)

Then from behind a tree trunk appears a strange apparition. It is a Congo witch doctor, wizened and old, naked except for a small animal tied about his waist. He is painted a bright red, antelope horns are on each side of his head, and in his hand he carries a bone rattle. He

begins a dance and a chant that grow ever wilder. Pursued by devils, he flees, he cries shrilly and halts on a desperate note of despair. Then wild hope seizes him; the evil forces demand sacrifice. He points to the sacred tree, to the river beyond, to the altar, and finally to Jones with a ferocious command. It is Jones who must offer himself for sacrifice. He seizes hysterically. The witch-doctor springs to the river bank and calls from its depths a crocodile god. Jones stares at the huge head with the glittering green eyes. Then, at the command of the witch-doctor, he squirms on his belly nearer and nearer, moving constantly. Finally there comes the thought of the one bullet left him, and the hallucination is dispelled in the usual way.

The study of hallucinations so far has shown that they are dramatic pictorial representations of previous knowledge forgotten or remembered, received through actual or vicarious experience. Now, then, is this last hallucination to be justified from the standpoint of psychology? It is true that Jones might have seen a similar looking witch-doctor, for the negroes on the island were savages and still believed in incantations conducted by such a one. Such a creature might, then, have entered his consciousness at one time or another. It is even possible that the crocodile god might have had some part in his conscious knowledge, if, as it may be supposed, it figured in the religion of the savages. But how is one to explain Jones's obscure impulse to kneel in devotion before the crude altar? Certainly he did not enter into any such savage rituals, he who considered himself a member in good standing of the Baptist church. And how is to be explained his ready understanding that he was to sacrifice himself to the crocodile god towards which he actually "squirmed on his belly"? The answer lies in Carl Jung's explanation of the "primordial images." He writes ("Psychology

of the Unconscious Processes," Analytical Psychology, p. 410):

In every individual, in addition to the personal memories, there are also ... the great "primordial images," the inherited potentialities of human imagination. They have always been potentially latent in the structure of the brain ...

It is therefore in this further stage of transference that those phantasies are produced that have no basis in personal reminiscence. Here it is a matter of the manifestation of the deeper layers of the unconscious, where the primordial universally-human images are lying dormant.

All this becomes plausible enough, then. Jones, in his mad terror, is beset by conflict where his reason is easily routed. From the great unconscious within him which is now master of the conscious come images, or knowledge, which he has never known, which are foreign to his personal memories, to his actual or vicarious experiences, and yet, since he is a part of the universal human mind, he shares the "primordial images" belonging to its secrets. The unconscious may then furnish the subjects for visions as well as does the conscious.

Eugene O'Neill has revealed himself even in this highly imaginative play an admirable analyst of the human mind, strained and mystifying as it is at times.

IX  
DIFF'RENT

Diff'rent is a play rich in its psychological meaning. It is the story of a woman so inhuman in her idealism that she brings destruction to herself as well as to the man who loves her. In her life is found an excellent study of sex-suppression deliberately imposed by one who tries to live in the rarified atmosphere of an abstract ideal rather than on the more normal level where concrete instinct can be true to its own nature.

In the case of Emma Crosby, her goal of superiority lies in a strange direction. But the goals sought by human beings whereby they seek to set themselves above their fellow beings conform to no definite standard. In the following passage Adler makes note of the diversity which characterizes man's effort to be superior (Individual Psychology, p. 7):

Whether a person desires to be an artist, the first in his profession, or a tyrant in his home, to hold converse with God or humiliate other people; whether he regards his suffering as the most important thing in the world to which everyone must show obeisance, whether he is chasing after unattainable ideals or old deities, over-stepping all limits and norms, at every part of his way he is guided and spurred on by his longing for superiority, the thought of his godlikeness, the belief in his special magical power.

Like Mat Burke in "Anna Christie", Emma has placed her goal in an ideal which she has made of another person. She wants to possess what no others of her acquaintance have--a lover who is "diff'rent" from other men, who is sexually pure. As long as she can believe in

the ideal that she makes of Caleb Williams, she rests content in her smug feeling of superiority.

Her ideal is soon shattered, however, for Dana hears that Caleb has had an affair with a native woman in the South Sea Islands. Though she realizes that this is his only offense against the moral code and that he was hardly responsible for what took place, she yet breaks off her engagement, believing that she can have no faith in the future if her ideal of the past has proved false. To the bewildered young captain, she says:

Oh, I wish I could make you see—my reason. . . .  
 What you done is just what any other man would  
 have done—and being like them is exactly what'll  
 keep you from ever seeing my meaning. Maybe it's  
 my fault more'n your'n. It's like this, Caleb.  
 Ever since we was little I guess I've always had  
 the idea that you was—diff'rent. And when we  
 grewed up and got engaged I thought that more and  
 more. And you was diff'rent, too! And that was  
 why I loved you. And now you've proved you ain't.  
 And so how can I love you any more? I don't,  
 Caleb, and that's all there is to it. You've  
 busted something way down inside me—and I can't  
 love you no more.

(I, p. 212.)

Dana can no longer assert her superiority in the possession of a lover who is "diff'rent"; she therefore immediately sets up another goal wherein this desire to be unique, or superior, may find some compensation for its frustration as well as a substitute for its motivation. She determines to never marry, and, moreover, she manages the situation in such a way that she brings Caleb to the point where he promises that he also will remain single—until she decides to change her mind, "thirty years if it's needful." Such a promise, indeed, sets her apart from the others, particularly when that promise is made in the face of a denial that she will ever relent and marry Caleb.

Unfortunately O'Neill does not let us see what was going on in the soul of Emma during these thirty years. We see only the effect of the conflict which must have tormented her during the long years. But the effect is indeed telling. There can be no doubt that there was a conflict—a pathological conflict in which the libidinous impulse and the ego impulse were the two contending parties, for Captain Williams prophesied as much when, upon hearing Emma declare she would stay single, he said, "I can't picture you that, Emma. It's natural in some but it ain't in you." Mrs. Crosby also had doubts concerning the advisability of suppressing the normal instincts of her daughter when she exclaimed, "Why, Emma, it'd be jest like goin' agen an act of Nature for you not to marry him."

However, Emma's effort at sex suppression began before she refused to marry Caleb. She was one of those women to whom the subject of sex was always disagreeable. When Caleb alluded to the loose morals of the fisherfolk, she said, frowningly, "But don't let's talk about that sort of ructions. I hate to think of such things—even joking. I ain't that sort." And since she believed she was of a different "sort," Emma perhaps thought she might easily deny the sex instinct by means of suppressing it. Whatever libidinous impulse she became aware of was deliberately pushed out of consciousness, for the censor, or ego ideal, in her would tolerate nothing that departed from the idealized picture she made of her life.

But Freud says that suppression of so powerful an instinct is rarely complete and absolute. A pathological condition often results from an attempt to deny the expression of an impulse so fundamental and so impelling. Such ill effects may be offset when the impulse adopts another aim, genetically related to the abandoned one, save



that it is no longer sexual but social (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 299). Whether Emma ever attempted this process of sublimation is doubtful, at least there is nothing in the play to suggest this. Freud goes on to say that "the measure of unsatisfied libido which the average human being can stand is limited . . .; sublimation can, moreover, never account for more than a certain small fraction of the libido, and finally most people possess the capacity for sublimation only to a very slight degree" (p. 300). Complete suppression of the sex impulse, Freud, then, believes to be impossible. "Self-denial gives rise to conflict, for libido deprived of its gratification is forced to seek other means and ends. . . The rejected libidinous desires manage to have their own way, through circuitous byways, but not without catering to the objections through the observance of a certain symptom-formation; the symptoms are the new or substitute satisfactions which the condition of self-denial has made necessary" (p. 303).

Before further considering the symptom development, it should be noted that Freud mentions still another escape for the libido if it can not find satisfaction in sublimation. He says, "If reality remains inflexible even where the libido is prepared to take another object in place of the one denied it, the libido will then finally be compelled to resort to regression and to seek gratification in one of the earlier stages in its organizations already outlived, or by means of one of the objects given up in the past" (p. 312). As there can be found nothing that suggests an attempted sublimation in the life of Emma, so there is nothing that implies that the libido was enticed by fixations which it left behind as it developed in her.

Finally it must be stated that Emma was not able to overcome the

conflict between her sex-impulse and her ego-impulse to the advantage of the ego ideal. She failed in achieving her goal—suppression of the sex instinct—though even Freud admits there are a few human beings who can successfully attain this end without injury to themselves (p. 299).

What, then, has happened to Emma during these thirty years to make the following picture of her plausible?

... The thirty years have transformed Emma into a withered, scrawny woman. But there is something revoltingly incongruous about her, a pitiable sham, a too-apparent effort to cheat the years by appearances. The white dress, she wears is too frilly, too youthful for her; so are the high-heeled pumps and clocked stockings. There is an absurd suggestion of rouge on her tight cheeks and thin lips, of pencilled make-up about her eyes. The black of her hair is brazenly untruthful. Above all there is shown in her simpering, self-consciously coquettish manner that laughable—and at the same time irritating and disgusting—mockery of undignified age snatching greedily at the empty simulacrum of youth. She resembles some passé stock actress of fifty made up for a heroine of twenty.

(II, p. 216.)

Emma has become an embittered victim of sex-suppression. By the time the second act opens, the conflict has come to an end. Disgusting as Emma is, she yet has achieved some sort of compromise with herself that frees her of a neurosis. The suppression which she strove to bring about was only a prerequisite for the evolution of the symptom. Freud says that "the symptom serves as a substitute for a process kept back by suppression" (p. 256). Later he adds, "The two forces that have contended against each other meet once more in the symptom; they become reconciled through the compromise of a symptom development" (pp. 311-312). In Emma's case the symptom development does not involve a regression to an earlier state of libidinal development, nor does it imply the turning away from reality and the transference of the libido to the elaboration of the imagination. Emma's symptom

development finds satisfaction in the distorted love affair which she carries on with Caleb's dissolute nephew.

If O'Neill has been following Freud's theory of suppression, it may well be asked how the libido in achieving its satisfaction in a way so opposed to the age is yet able to obtain a compromise, for Freud states that "the opposition that has arisen against it in the ego follows it down by a 'counter-siege' and forces it to choose such an expression as will serve at the same time to express itself" (p. 513). Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that the ego is flattered by the youth's apparent interest in the old woman. At least for the time being Emma has solved her conflict and is happy in her ridiculous illusion.

Now that suppression has been completely routed, it is interesting to note how eagerly the sex starved woman seeks to discuss the very subject that was so repellant to her earlier in life. Emma has been taking Benny to task for patronising Tilly Small.

EMMA. (Excitedly) I ain't blamin' you. But her—she ought to have better sense—at her age, too, when she's old enough to be your Mother.

BENNY. Aw, say, she ain't half as old— (Catching himself). Oh, she's an old fool, you're right there, Benny.

EMMA. And I hope you know the kind of woman she is and has been since she was a girl.

BENNY. (With a wink). I wasn't born yesterday. I got her number long ago. I ain't in my cradle, got me! I'm in the army! Ouh! (chuckles) ... These small town skirts don't hand me nothin'. (With a grin.) You forget I was in France—and after the dames over there these birds here look some punk.

EMMA. (Sits down—wetting her lips). And what—what are those French critters like?

BENNY. (With a wink). Oh, Boy! They're some pippins! It ain't so much that they're better lookin' as that they've got a way with 'em—lots of ways. (He laughs)

with a lascivious smirk.)

**EMMA.** (Unconsciously hitching her chair nearer his. The turn the conversation has taken seems to have aroused a hectic morbid intensity in her. She continues to wet her lips and push back her hair from her flushed face as if it were stifling her). What do you mean, Benny? What kind of ways have they got—them French girls. ... Tell me! Tell me all about 'em. You needn't be scared—to talk open with me. I ain't as strict as I seem—about hearin' things. Tell me! I've heard French girls was awful wicked!

(II, p. 226.)

Something new has come into her shriveled life. Around this disgusting object of love, her sex instinct flames, all the more vehemently for the years it lay smothered in dead ashes. But disillusionment comes quickly, mercilessly. In a moment when he believes himself disinherited, Benny asks her to marry him. Emma accepts and then breaks the revolting news to Caleb, who has just returned from a whaling trip to ask her, after thirty years, to again be his wife. Caleb hangs himself, and a short time later, having learned that Benny was simply making fun of her, Emma follows her lover to the barn—to put an end to the distorted human being which she at last knew herself to be.

X

"THE FIRST MAN"

In "The First Man" O'Shail concerns himself with a psychological study of a man who, during the course of his married life, passes from a normal state into an abnormal one. At the close of the play there is still a third change—a return to the earlier, happier condition marked by mental balance.

Curtis Jayson, a thoughtful, scholarly man, aloof in spite of his eager, boyish enthusiasm, and his wife Martha began their married life in Goldfield where Curtis was an engineer and geologist in his father-in-law's mine. These early years were filled with great happiness for them. They were, as Martha said, "very respectable home folks" who adored their two small daughters. Then came tragedy with the death of the two children. Martha is telling the story to Bigelow, a dear friend of theirs:

We were real lunatics for a time. And then when we'd calmed down enough to realize—how things stood with us—we swore we'd never have children again—to steal away their memory. It wasn't what you thought—romanticism—that set Curt wandering—and me with him. It was a longing to lose ourselves—to forget. He flung himself with all his power into every new study that interested him. He couldn't keep still—mentally or bodily—and I followed. He needed me—then—so dreadfully.

(I, p. 152.)

With the death of the children began the wanderings, the anthropological expeditions to every corner of the earth, which were to wipe out the bitter suffering and the torturous memories. With these wanderings began an abnormal period in the lives of Curtis and Martha,

for they determined never again to have children. Both of them attempted what psychologists call sublimation. Sublimation, as defined by Freud and all others who come after him, is a process which takes place when sexual desire relinquishes either its goal of partial gratification of desire, or the goal of desire towards reproduction, and adopts another aim, genetically related to the abandoned one save that it is no longer sexual but social (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 299).

How well this process has succeeded is revealed in Martha's answer when Bigelow asks whether the loss of the children is still the force that drives Curt on:

Oh, no. He's found himself. His work has taken the place of the children.

BIGELOW. And with you too?

MARTHA. (with a wan smile) Well, I've helped—all I could. His work has me in it, I like to think—and I have him.

(I, pp. 152-153.)

The one goal of sexual desire—that of reproduction—has successfully been sublimated in Curtis. Having given up this goal but retaining the other, the pursuit of pleasure as an independent goal, he falls into perversion. (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 275). Perversion implies regression, a return of libido to former stages of its development, says Freud. It thus becomes easy to explain Curt's mad jealousy when he learns that Martha is to have a child.

But first it is necessary to consider the success of the sublimation process in regard to Martha. She describes her own position in her passionate appeals to her husband for understanding:

... Your work is yours, not mine. I have been only a helper, a good comrade, too, I hope, but—somehow—outside of it all. Do you remember two years ago when we were camped in Yunnan, among the

aboriginal tribes? It was one night there when we were lying out in our sleeping-bags up in the mountains along the Tibetan frontier. I couldn't sleep. Suddenly I felt, oh, so tired—utterly alone—out of harmony with you—with the earth under me. ... And all the wandering about the world, and all the romance and excitement I'd enjoyed in it, appeared an aimless, futile business, chasing around in a circle in an effort to avoid touching reality. ... It seemed that I was the only creature alive—who was not alive. And all at once the picture came of a tribes-woman who stood looking at us in a little mountain village as we rode by. She was nursing her child. Her eyes were so curiously sure of herself. She was horribly ugly, poor woman, and yet—as the picture came back to me—I appeared to myself the ugly one while she was beautiful. ... such a longing for another child came to me that I began sobbing. ... And when we came back here—to have a home at last, I was so happy because I saw my chance of fulfillment—before it was too late.

(II, pp. 184-185.)

Martha loved her husband deeply and she knew the passionate devotion in which he held her; yet he was insufficient. The desire to have a child could not be sublimated. Her longing is an artistic expression of the Freudian principle that a normal woman desires above all else a child. When this desire is one day fulfilled her joy is great, particularly if that child is a boy (New Introductory Lectures, p. 175). Martha says, "I know it will be a boy."

For two months now she knows that she is going to have a child. When Curt realizes it was her own seeking, he becomes indignant, hurt, and at once jealous:

Can you expect me to be glad when you propose to introduce a stranger who will steal away your love, your interest—who will separate us and deprive me of you! No, no, I can't! It's asking the impossible. I'm only human.

(II, p. 186.)

The man's wild jealousy knows no bounds when, agonized by his wife's suffering, he admits to Bigelow that he hates the child, that he has secretly hoped all along it would be born dead.

The thought came to me that if a certain thing happened, Martha could still go with me. And I knew, if it did happen, that she'd want to go, that she'd fling herself into the spirit of our work to forget, that she'd be mine more than ever.

(III, p. 200.)

When the news is brought that the child is a healthy boy, Curtis gives a horrible cry of rage and anguish, "No! No!"

Such intense jealousy can only exist when the process of regression leads an individual back to a former, more primitive state. The normal sex life of the man with its two goals already discussed has undergone perversion through the sublimation of one goal and the maintenance of the other.

When the infant becomes the cause of his wife's death, the man, crazed by grief, refuses to look at the child he has never seen. The pleas of his friend that he be reconciled to his child avail not at all. Flight to Asia is his one objective; here in his wandering he hopes to find the spirit of Martha again that may sustain him.

Curtis is finally restored to normality by an overwhelming shock. He learns that his family, whose smug, small town bigotry and hypocrisy he has always despised, has been suspecting that the child is not his. He passes his hand over his eyes like one stricken with nausea:

So—that's—what has been in your minds. Oh, this is bestial—disgusting! And there is nothing to be done. I feel defenseless. One would have to be as low as you are—She would have been defenseless, too. It is better she's dead...

He rushes wildly up the stairs. After a while he comes back, a strange exultation on his face:

Well—my answer to you—your rotten world—I kissed him—he's mine! He looked at me—it was as if Martha looked at me—through his eyes.

The light of an ideal begins to shine in his eyes.



Yes, I must go! What good would I be for him--  
or anyone--if I stayed? ... But I'll come back.  
When he's old enough, I'll teach him to know and  
love a big, free life. Martha used to say that  
he would take her place in time. Martha shall  
live again for me in him.

(III, p. 220 ff.)

This last speech links Curtis definitely with the Robert tradi-  
tion begun in Beyond the Horizon and carried along in Straw, Gold,  
"Jimmie Christie", and Diff'rent. In each play there is the dreamer,  
the idealist chasing after an illusion because he is not willing to  
accept the limitations that bound his life. Like Captain Bartlett  
who knew in his heart that he nursed a false illusion, Curtis also  
set up a dream equally false, since it defied the demands of human  
nature, to shield him from a reality that tortured him. In the end  
Bartlett's dream destroyed him and brought misery and death to others.  
But the captain was not a romanticist at heart as was Curtis, and  
therefore the latter could better cope with things belonging to the life  
of a dreamer. Curtis was a Robert, not an Andrew; so when one illusion  
died another came to take its place. When his dream-life with Martha  
came to a tragic end, a new ideal was built up about the child. He  
remained a dreamer.

## XI

### THE HAIRY APE

In many of his dramas O'Neill shows himself an acute critic of the social and industrial structure of modern society. However, in none of his plays is this criticism so bitter, so overwhelming, as in The Hairy Ape. In a study which treats of O'Neill and his application of psychological principles, The Hairy Ape is of particular interest because of the psychological import given to the social problem here presented. This statement does not imply that O'Neill is less a psychological thinker in other plays which deal with social criticism. As Winther points out (Eugene O'Neill, p. 128), the importance of O'Neill as a social critic lies in the very fact that he emphasises this psychological aspect of the modern social order under his observation.

In The Hairy Ape it is not a question of starvation through loss of work, a demand for shorter hours, the necessity for higher wages that motivates the action; it is, rather, the crying need for every individual to do something that to him seems important and necessary. Yank's work is essential to his personality; it is an expansion of his ego; it makes him feel that he "belongs." As Yank sits in the pose of Rodin's "Thinker" pondering over his unhappy situation, he refers to this psychological necessity which O'Neill makes the central idea of the drama. He has just been thrown out of the I. W. W. headquarters.

So dem boids don't tink I belong, neider. Aw,  
to hell wit 'em! Dey're in de wrong pew--de  
same old bull--soapboxes and Salvation Army--  
no guts! Out out an hour offen de job a day

and make me happy! Gimme a dollar more a day and make me happy! Tree square a day, and cauliflowers in de front yard—ah! rights—a woman and kids—a lousy vote—and I'm all fixed for Jesus, huh? Aw, hell! What does dat get yuh? Dis ting's in your inside, but it ain't your belly. Feedin' your face—sinkers and coffee—dat don't touch it. It's a way down—at de bottom. Yuh can't grab it, and yuh can't stop it. It moves, and everything moves. It stops and de whole world stops. Dat's no now—I don't tick see?—I'm a busted Ingersoll, dat's what. Steel was me, and I owned de world. Now I ain't steel, and de world owns me. Aw, Hell! I can't see—it's all dark, get me? It's all wrong! ...

(7, pp. 83-84.)

The tragedy of The Hairy Ape lies in the unequal struggle with fate—a fate growing out of his nature and his environment. Of The Hairy Ape, O'Neill has written (Clark, Eugene O'Neill, p. 125):

Yank can't go forward and so he goes back. This is what his shaking hands with the gorilla meant. But he can't go back to "belonging" either. The gorilla kills him. The subject here is the same ancient one that always was and always will be the one subject for drama, and that is man and his struggle with his own fate. The struggle used to be with the gods, but is now with himself, his own past, his attempt "to belong."

The "past" referred to goes back in this instance to the unhappy childhood of the hairy-chested, long-armed man of tremendous power who shares with his fellow-stokers the receding brows, the small, fierce, resentful eyes that are so suggestive of the Neanderthal Man. When one of the more sentimental of the stokers refers to home, Yank follows the remark with an outburst that reveals only too clearly his position in the first social group with which he had to cope:

... Home! T' hell wit home! Where d' yuh get dat tripe? Dis is home, see? What d' yuh want wit home? (Proudly) I runned away from mine when I was a kid. On'y too glad to beat it, dat was me. Home was lickings for me, dat's all. But yuh can bet your sheit no one ain't never licked me since! Wanter try it, any of youse? Huh! I guess not. ...

(1, p. 43.)

With this emphasis on Yank's treatment during his early life, which is repeated later in the play, O'Neill shows himself in harmony with Adlerian psychology. Adler regards personality as derived either directly or indirectly from humiliation and a sense of failure and believes that every individual aims at the removal of such humiliation and the substitution in its place of a sense of power or prestige (Individual Psychology, p. 6 ff). Yank, beaten by his drunken parents, felt decidedly inferior in strength and then his ego suffered keen humiliation. Out of this experience "when he learned to take punishment," arose an imagined goal, an attempt at a final compensation, and a definite life-plan.

Of this life-plan Adler says (Individual Psychology, p. 6): "As soon as the goal of a psychic movement or its life-plan has been recognized, then we are to assume that all the movements of its constituent parts will coincide with both the goal and the life-plan." In accordance with this principle, O'Neill makes the controlling idea in Yank's life responsible for all his actions. Not only his actions, but also his thinking and his feelings are permeated by the one unified life-plan. For Yank, then, as, according to Adler, for every man, the goal that his psyche strikes for him is that of superiority. As his parents were superior to him, so now he must become superior to others. The brief incidents of his life are summed up in response to Long's inquiry:

Worked along shore. I runned away when me old  
lady croaked wit de tremens. I helped at truckin'  
and in de market. Den I shipped in de stockhold.  
Sure. Dat belongs. De rest was nothin'.

(5, p. 37.)

Thus early he found his place in life. He belonged. Spurred on by his superiority in his work, he now begins to believe in his own

godlikeness, in his special magical power. In order to gain control over his fellow-stokers, he proceeds along a straight line, bravely, proudly; an overbearing, obstinate, cruel man, characteristics which, as a child, he determined to acquire in order to reach his goal. Disgusted with Paddy's praise of the old, Yank proudly points to his place in the universal scheme of things:

Hey, you old Harp! Hey, youse guys! Say, listen to me—wait a moment—I gotter talk, see. I be-long and he don't. He's dead but I'm livin'. Listen to me! Sure I'm part of de engines! Why de hell not! Day move, don't they? Day're speed, ain't day? Day smash trou, don't day? Twenty-five knots a hour! Dat's goin' some! Dat's new stuff! Dat belongs! ... I'm new, get me? Hell in de stokehole? Sure! It takes a man to work in hell. Hell, sure, dat's my fav'rite climate. I eat it up! I git fat on it! It's me makes it hot! It's me makes it roar! It's me makes it move! Sure, on'y for me everyting stops. It all goes dead, get me? De noise and smoke and all de engines movin' de world, day stop. Dere ain't nothin' no more! Dat's what I'm sayin'. Everyting else dat makes de world move, somep'n makes it move. It can't move witout somep'n else, see? Dem yuh get down to me. I'm de bottom, get me! Dere ain't nothin' foither. I'm de end! I'm de start! I start somep'n and de world moves! It—dat's me!—de new dat's molderin' de old! I'm de ting in coal dat makes it burn; I'm steam and oil for de engines; I'm de ting in noise dat makes yuh hear it; I'm smoke and express trains and steamers and factory whistles; I'm de ting in gold dat makes it money! And I'm what makes iron into steel! Steel, dat stands for de whole ting! And I'm steel—steel—steel! ...

(1, pp. 47-48.)

But this illusion of importance is short-lived. The steel king's daughter, who is on her way to new sensations in the London slums, completes her pose by coining with two officers to visit the stokehole. Yank is in the process of delivering a brutal speech as he stuffs coal into the blazing furnace. The girl, dressed all in white, appears like an apparition to him; Yank, naked and brutal with his gorilla face, paralyses her with terror. Just before fainting with fright, she cries,

"Take me away! Oh, the filthy beast!"

Yank sits trying to think. She has called him a beast, looked at him as if he were a hairy ape, and broke his nerve. This woman is the first who has dared question Yank's feeling of superiority; she classed him with an ape. He must get even, he must "fix her white face."

Youse all him bet your shoits I'll git even wit her. I'll show her if she tinks she--She grinds de organ and I'm on de string, huh? I'll fix her! Let her come down again and I'll fling her in de furnace! She'll move den! She won't shiver at nothin', den! Speed, dat'll be her! She'll belong den!

(4, p. 64.)

Three weeks later on Fifth Avenue he waits for her kind. He insults them, but they pay no attention to him; they are aroused only at the sight of monkey fur in an expensive show window. Monkey fur!

I see yuh, all in white! I see yuh white-faced tart, yuh! Hairy ape, huh? I'll hairy ape yuh!  
(8, p. 71.)

The experience in the stockhole was so intense that it has become traumatic for Yank. The emotion accompanying the recollection of the disturbing experience is so strong that he grips at the street curbing as if to pluck it out and hurl it. Foiled, he grabs a lamp-post and tries to pull it up for a club and in his effort is knocked over by a man who is running for a bus. The ensuing attack on the surprised gentleman finally leads to Yank's arrest.

When Yank wakes up in jail he thinks himself in a zoo. The idea of the hairy ape has been so fixed that Yank experiences a regression. The superior man who believes so firmly in his importance returns to the earlier state wherein he knew himself to be inferior. O'Neill presents here the situation that Freud describes in his discussion of regression. "Having attained to this latter and more highly developed

form, the impulse is forced to a regression when it encounters great external difficulties in the exercise of its function, and accordingly can not reach the goal which will satisfy its strivings" (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 235). Yank fights desperately to maintain his feeling of superiority. Under the delusion that society works with dynamite, he joins the I. W. W. only to be taken for a secret agent and bodily thrown out upon the pavement. In front of the office door he sits wondering where he does belong.

Say, youse up dere, Man in de Moon, yuh look so wise, giuss de answer, huh? Slip me de inside dope information right from de stable—where do I get off at, huh?

(7, p. 35.)

A passing policeman hauls him to his feet as he gives him the answer, "Go to hell."

During a sleepless night spent on a bench, Yank decides that he belongs nowhere. He is crushed by his inferiority, by his utter worthlessness in the scheme of things. Haunted by the fixated idea that relates him with the gorilla, he visits the zoo to find out what a hairy ape looks like. The thought comes to Yank that the gorilla is more fortunate than he. To him he says:

Yuh don't belong wit 'em the human lot and yuh know it. But me, I belong wit 'em—but I don't, see? ... It's dis way, what I'm drivin' at. Youse can sit and dope dream in de past, green woods, de jungle and de rest of it. Den yuh belong and dey don't. Den yuh kin laugh at 'em, see? Yuh're de champ of de wild. But me—I ain't got no past to tink in, nor nothin' dat's comin', on'y what's now—and dat don't belong. Sure, you're de best off! ... I ain't on oith and I ain't in heaven, get me? I'm in de middle tryin' to separate 'em, takin' all de waist punches from bot' of 'em...

(8, p. 36.)

A sudden inspiration comes to his crazed, suffering mind. Perhaps he and the gorilla together can assert their superiority—and, incidental-

ly, in the same manner that Yank fashioned in his childhood after the pattern of his parents. "We'll knock 'em offen de oith and croak wit de band playin'." And so he opens the door to the cage and extends his hand to the gorilla in token of brotherhood. The animal misunderstands and crushes the man to death. With his dying breath he gasps out the tragedy of his life,

Even him didn't tink I belonged. Where do I fit in?  
(8, p. 87.)

Yank moved from one defeat to another, striving vainly to find some answer to his problem, to seek some corner where his goal, his craving to be superior to someone, might expand and thus satisfy his ego. But intercourse with the world, with this machine made world that robs one of importance as an individual, destroyed his life-plan. Had Yank had a "past" to remember as had the gorilla, or had he been a deeper thinker, he might have created for himself an inner life and so escaped the tragedy that overtook him; for "whoever takes the goal of godlikeness seriously or literally will soon be compelled to flee from real life and compromise by seeking a life within life; if fortunate in art, but more generally in pietism, neurosis, or crime" (Adler, Individual Psychology, p. 8). The latter alternative the unfortunate being was about to undertake when the gorilla put him "where he probably belonged."



## XII

### THE FOUNTAIN

The Fountain, which is an imaginary story of Ponce de Leon's quest for the Fountain of Youth, offers greater interest in its philosophical content than in its psychological import. As a study in psychology, it presents the struggle between the dear and the dreamer, between the egoist and the visionary. Here again, as in Felded and in Days Without End, one sees the torment in a divided soul which for a time follows the lure of one particular goal only to be confused by the erection of a second one equally compelling and alluring. Each goal as it appears represents the answer to that insatiable quest for inner peace and wholeness. When Juan Ponce de Leon cries out as he lies wounded in the forest, "Why have I lived! To die alone like a beast in the wilderness?" one is reminded of the inevitable question in the mind of the Hairy Ape who, in his blind, unthinking way, was seeking some assurance for his life, some place where he could feel that he belonged and thus find peace.

Ponce de Leon would find the answer to life by thinking, the very act of which the Hairy Ape was incapable. "A romantic dreamer governed by the ambitious thinker," such is the character of the Spanish nobleman at the outset of the play. Juan is further described by Marie, the woman who loves him, in these terms: "You are noble, the soul of courage, a man of men. You will go far, soldier of iron—and dreamer. God pity you of these two selves should ever clash! You shall have all my prayers for your success—but I shall add, "Dear Savier, let him

know tenderness to recompense him when his hard youth dies!" Here is once again emphasized the dual nature of the man; here is also presented the problem of the play—the conflict between the realist and the idealist.

The fact that even his dreams are ruled by his logic is soon made known as one listens to Juan's conversation with his friends. In admiration of another dreamer, Columbus, Juan says: "I saw him today. He was riding his flea-bitten mule as if he were a Caesar in a triumph. His eyes were full of golden cities." There follows talk about the proposed voyage to find the West Passage to the East. Then Juan amazes everyone by his announcement:

I'm planning to go [with Columbus] . But not on his first voyage. Before I pledge my sword I must have proof that it can serve Spain's glory. There is no profit in staking life for dreams.

(1, p. 113.)

But even as he laughs in scorn at dreams, he listens to a myth sung by a Moorish bard, a myth that sinks deep into his dreamer's mind and there plants the seed of Maria's prophecy. It is a tale of,

... a sacred grove where all things live in the old harmony they knew before man came. Beauty resides there and is articulate. Each sound is music, and every sight a vision. The trees bear golden fruit. And in the center of the grove there is a fountain—beautiful beyond human dreams, in whose rainbows all of life is mirrored. In that fountain's waters, young maidens play and sing and tend it everlastingly for every joy in being one with it. This is the Fountain of Youth ... The wise men of that far-off land have known it many ages. They make it their last pilgrimage when sick with years and weary of their lives. Here they drink, and the years drop from them like a worn-out robe ...

(1, pp. 114-114.)

At the moment, however, Juan Ponce de Leon knows the strength and glory of youth and such a tale is not for him, although he admits,

"The devil! His song beguiled me." Then, in another mood he adds, "Fountain of Youth, God help us, with love to boot! I wish he'd sung instead of the armies and power of the Great Khan!" Carried away with the sense of his own power and greatness, there is no room in his egoistic soul for Maria, a woman older than he, and he dismisses the thought of her love as he says to his friend Luis:

Come, forget sad nonsense. We will drink to  
voyaging with Don Christopher—and to the battles  
before those golden cities of Cathay!

LUIS. Lucifer fire your cities! I drink to my fountain!

JUAN. Your health, Sir Lying Poet!

LUIS. And yours, Sir Glory-Glutton!

(I, p. 117.)

The epithet that Luis gives his friend admits but slight exaggeration. The goal that Juan has set for himself is silhouetted in black and white. To Maria he says, "Spain is the mistress to whom I give my heart, Spain and my own ambitions, which are Spain's." Here Juan Ponce de Leon shows himself an integrated personality—integrated by the directing power of a life-plan that has set up the Adlerian "will to power" as its ultimate end. What Adler says in his Individual Psychology (p. 6), might well be said of this Spanish cavalier: "all [his] psychical powers are under the control of a directive idea and all expressions of emotions, feeling, thinking, willing, acting, dreaming as well as psycho-pathological phenomena, are permeated by one unified life-plan."

Thus Juan accompanies Columbus on his second voyage "to Cathay." While Columbus would discover wealth so that he might lead another Crusade, Juan would find the golden cities for a different purpose. Proudly he says to this "foreigner": "[I am] a noble of Spain who thinks of her greatness while you dream of Gexon and Rome; a soldier

of the present, not the ghost of a Crusader! . . . Now a new era of world empire dawns for Spain. By living in the past you will consecrate her future to fanaticism!" Vehemently he continues:

I respect you, Columbus—but I have my vision, too. Spain can become the mistress of the world, greater than ancient Rome, if she can find leaders who will wald conquest to her, who will dare to govern with tolerance ...

(2, p. 124.)

As the two argue they hear shouts of "Land! Land!" and when the sun bursts over the rim, Juan points into the distance with the words, "There! I see! In a haze of gold and purple—Greater Spain!" His patriotic fervor carries him a step further. When Columbus commands all to kneel and pray, Juan draws his sword and with fierce exultancy cries, "This is a cross too, a soldier's cross—the cross of Spain!" He sticks the point into the deck before him and kneels before his sword.

Twenty years later Juan is governor of Porto Rico, an old, gray-haired man, sadly disillusioned. The glory that he dreamed of for Spain was never found, and his own ambition was rewarded by nothing more than this obscure position. Bitterly he complains to Luis of Columbus:

How can my pride forgive? For years I held his solitary outpost; I suffered wounds and fevers; I fought the Indians for him while he went sailing for the Garden of Eden, the mines of Solomon, his Bible-crazed chimeras! He knew my honor would not permit my conspiring against him as others did. So he ignored my services and deliberately condemned me to obscurity. Never no mention of my name in his reports to Spain! It is only since his downfall—but this, too, is an old story. Why should I not sail to find Cathay? He failed in that—but I would succeed! I am no visionary chasing rainbows ...

(3, p. 124.)

His dreams are still of the mythical Cathay that is to bring glory to Spain and to himself. His goal is still unchanged—twenty years of

small duties have not blunted his ambition. Even now he waits for the patent from the King to continue his search for Cathay.

At this moment something new comes into the life of the soldier of iron in the person of Beatriz de Cordova—the child of the Maria who once loved him and who saw the conflict that must one day arise in his soul. Beatriz has been made Juan's ward, and she brings him the commission to explore the land of his dreams. Now there comes to Juan a passion for renewed youth. An Indian, Namo, fires his belief in the Fountain of Youth, for he, like the Moorish poet, has spoken of a Spring of Life wherein old men might bathe and so become young warriors again. "Where there is smoke there must be a spark of fire," thinks Juan. Thus his dreams center about the Fountain, a fountain that he must find in order to win the love of Beatriz.

Now begins the conflict between the thinker and the dreamer, between the egoist and the altruist. Ambition for himself and for Spain fades as a new goal shines forth in the symbol of Beatriz. For a time Juan's character becomes disintegrated, his sentiments not knowing which goal to follow. At no time, however, does his personality become schizoid as is true in the character of Dion Anthony and of Ephraim Cabot. Only extreme cases of disintegration produce what psychologists term multiple personality. Juan arrives at some compromise between his two goals and thus saves the unity of his personality. If he can find the Fountain of Youth, he will also find the golden cities of Cathay; for Namo leads him to think that both are in the land of his fathers. To gain the love of Beatriz, then, he sets out to find the mythical land which will restore his youth and incidentally enrich his beloved Spain. McDougall says that (Outline of Abnormal Psychology, p. 526) ". . . the integration of personality, the

development of character, results from the formation of some dominant purpose, the adoption of some goal that is felt to be of supreme value, a purpose and a goal to which all others are subordinated as of less urgency and lower value." Just before he sails, Beatriz kneels and presents Juan's sword to him, saying,

I give you back your sword--to bring good fortune.  
Now you must find the golden cities!

JUAN. I care only for the one, Beatriz--the golden city  
of Youth, where you are queen.

(6, p. 164.)

Juan, then, has subordinated all other purposes to the one dominating his heart. The "soldier of iron" has found what Maria prayed for, tenderness. Love has risen above ambition at last. Again his character presents an integrated whole, but this time his personality represents the romantic dreamer in place of the ambitious thinker.

Nano leads the Spaniards to the Florida coast, where he secretly plans the death of Juan. As the voyagers come on shore, Juan is so carried away by his vision of the Fountain that a noble must remind him to take possession of the land. He makes a confused gesture as if wiping cobwebs from his brain; then he orders that the banners of Castille and Aragon be brought. The dreamer finds it hard to remember Spain. In exultation he says, "Cathay! We have found Cathay! This is the land--the Flowery Land! Our dreams lie hidden here! Sing the Te Deum!"

Juan is led by Nano to a spring and told that here is the Fountain of Youth. While gazing into its depth, he is shot from ambush and left for dead. He awakens in the gloom of the forest to cry to the Son of God for justice. "True," he cries, "I prayed for a miracle which was not Thine. Let me be damned then, but let me believe in Thy Kingdom! Show me Thy miracle--a sign--a word--a second's vision of what I am

that I should have lived and died! A test, Lord God of Hosts!" Then there arises the vision of a fountain into which pass the forms of Beatriz, a Chinese poet, the Moorish bard, the Indian medicine man, a Dominican monk of the present. Juan stares at them—"All faiths—they vanish—are one and equal—within— What are you, Fountain? That from which all life springs and to which it must return—God! Are all dreams of you but the one dream?" Then the figure of an old Indian woman comes to sit beside her; he pities her and in a flash the mask falls off. She is Beatriz. Juan gasps, "Beatriz! Age—Youth— They are the same rhythm of eternal life!" As Beatriz goes towards the Fountain, he cries, "Light comes! Light creeps into my soul!" And as the figure disappears into the Fountain, he cries in exultation, "Death is no more! . . . I see! Fountain Everlasting, time without end! Soaring flame of the spirit transfiguring Death! All is within! All things dissolve, flow on eternally! O aspiring fire of life, sweep the dark soul of man! Let us burn in thy unity." The voice of Beatriz comes from the Fountain, singing,

God is a flower  
Forever blooming  
God is a fountain  
Forever blooming.

The light fades. There is darkness, and Juan's voice is heard sobbing with happiness,

O God, Fountain of Eternity, Thou art the All in  
One, the One in All—the Eternal Becoming which  
is Beauty!

(10, pp. 182-185.)

The theme heard here for the first time appears again in Lazarus Laughed with greater elaboration and more poetic execution.

Juan Ponce de Leon devoted his life to finding the Fountain of Youth. He followed a rainbow as bright and at the same time as evanes-

cent as that of Columbus whom the thinker in Juan held up to ridicule. But when he in turn became the dreamer, he sought his pot of gold with an ardor that became a form of mania. Like many a dreamer he did not find what he set out for, but something else was discovered that in the end made the quest worth while. Juan could not become young again, but he learned "that there is no gold but love." The thinker in Juan came to the realization that ventures may fail when conceived rationalistically and materialistically, though they may become glorious events when identified with the quest for love and beauty. "One must accept," says Juan, "absorb, give back, become oneself a symbol . . . Juan Ponce de Leon is past! He is resolved into the thousand moods of beauty that make up happiness—color of that sunset, of tomorrow's dawn, breath of the great Trade Wind—sunlight on grass, an insect's song, the rustle of leaves, an ant's ambition. I shall know eternal becoming—eternal youth!"

The Fountain, like Lazarus Laughed, is a dramatic poem of exaltation; it is the dreamer's never ending quest to find an answer to life and death. From the viewpoint of the psychologist, it demonstrates the power of a directing idea to marshal the emotions and actions of an individual so masterfully that the most visionary goal is not too fantastic for attainment.



XIII  
**WELDED**

edily in contrast to a play such as The Straw, where simplicity marks both characterization and theme, is Welded, a drama whose concentration and intellectuality suggest problems more fully treated in Strange Interlude. As The Straw is barren in its psychological interest, so Welded is over-burdened with psychoanalytical significance. The very language whereby the ideas are set forth is suggestive of the analytical discourse of a psychologist. Eleanor says, "Sometimes I think we've demanded too much. Now there's nothing left but that something which can't give itself. And I blame you for this—because I can neither take more nor give more—and you blame me! And then we fight." In this manner Eleanor and Cape analyse themselves and each other throughout the play, showing themselves to be intellectual beings who understand the conflicts that disintegrate their personalities though they can not conquer the desire of pride and self-love that lies at the root of their unhappiness.

In Welded O'Neill has taken for his subject the Narcissus theme. The drama presents a careful study of self-love, a psychic state analysed according to the tenets of Freudian psychology which O'Neill follows exactly in his portrayal of Michael Cape. The play depicts the struggle between the ego-instinct and the sex-instinct; between intellect and passion. At the outset O'Neill states that throughout the play two circles of light, "like auras of egoism, emphasize and intensify Eleanor and Michael." By means of this symbol the playwright

would mark once and for all the irreconcilable differences that cause the tension in the lives of his two characters.

The description of Michael Cape, the husband, is as follows: "His unusual face is a harrowed battlefield of super-sensitiveness, the features at war with one another--the forehead of a thinker, the eyes of a dreamer, the nose and mouth of a sensualist. One feels a powerful imagination tinged with somber sadness--a driving force which can be sympathetic and cruel at the same time. There is something tortured about him--a passionate tension, a self-protecting, arrogant defiance of life and his own weakness, a deep need for love as a faith in which to relax." Here one has a detailed picture of a self-worshipper who seeks to complete himself, or rather to project his own personality in his love choice.

Professor Freud says in his Introduction to Psychoanalysis (p. 366) that the narcissistic type chooses a love object which reflects his own personal ego. The description of Eleanor, the wife, is more superficial; yet her character is clearly a projection of Michael. "Her face, with its high, prominent cheek-bones, lacks harmony. It is dominated by passionate, blue-gray eyes, restrained by a high forehead from which the mass of her dark brown hair is combed straight back. The first impression of her whole personality is one of charm, partly innate, partly imposed by years of self-discipline." In Eleanor one finds the same combination of passion and intellect, in the passionate eyes and high forehead, as in Michael; the same need for discipline in order that the divided self might live more calmly, except that in the wife there is evidence that restraint has succeeded better than in the husband. Each one is proud of himself as an artist, Michael as a playwright, Eleanor as an actress. It is their combined effort that

has made each one a success. Michael seeks the completion of his dramas in the histrionic ability of his wife. The art of one complements that of the other, for Cape, speaking of his new play, says:

You'll see when I read you—And you're going to be marvelous! It's going to be the finest thing we've ever done!

ELEANOR. I love you for saying "we." But the "we" is you. I only—(with a smile of ironic self-pity)—act a part you've created.

CAPE. Nonsense! You're an artist. Each performance of yours has taught me something. Why, my women used to be—death masks. But now they're as alive as you are—(with a sudden grin)—at least when you play them.

(I, p. 180.)

As he seeks completion of his work, so Michael seeks completion of himself in what is the symbol of himself—his wife. He constantly looks for himself in Eleanor, and Eleanor strives to find herself in Michael. This intensity of their desire to become the other destroys their freedom, their individuality, to the point where the ego-instinct revolts and causes strife. This last remark is true only in the case of the wife, for the husband, the stronger of the two and the more perfect example of narcissism, sees that no harm befalls the ego. In Michael is exemplified Freud's statement that "one can be absolutely egoistic, and still have strong libidinous occupation of objects, in so far as the libidinous gratification by way of the object serves the needs of the ego. Egoism will then take care that the striving for the object results in no harm to the ego. One can be egoistic and at the same time excessively narcissistic, i.e., have very slight need of an object. This need may be for direct sexual satisfaction or even for those higher desires, derived from need, which we are in the habit of calling love as opposed to sensuality" (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 360). On the following page Freud says that "the sex object as a

rule draws upon itself a part of the narcissism of the ego. This is generally called 'sexual over-estimation' of the object. Thus Eleanor says, "I lost myself. I began living in you, I wanted to die and become you!" And Michael exults because, "You and I—year after year—together—forms of our bodies merging into one form; rhythms of our lives beating against each other, forming slowly the one rhythm—the life of Us—created by us! —beyond us, above us!"

Though Michael passionately loves his wife, his devotion in no sense infers a lessening of self-love. This is wholly in keeping with the narcissistic type as described by Freud who says that narcissism does not disappear even though the libido attaches itself to an external love object (p. 359). It has been noted that Michael's love for Eleanor is simply a reflection of his love for himself, for she is a projection of his own personality. Eleanor reminds him of this when she says, "You insist that I have no life at all outside of you. Even my work must exist only as an echo of yours."

Michael's intense self-love reveals itself again in the ensuing quarrel. He believes that only his talent as a playwright could have brought out Eleanor's ability as an actress, for, when she taunts him with his egoism, he says: "You were on the stage seven years before I met you. Your appearance in the work of other playwrights—you must admit you were anything but successful!" And when she would claim part of his success as a writer as growing out of her brilliant interpretation, he answers: "My plays had been written. The one you played in first was written three years before. The work was done. That's the proof."

The pride of the man becomes most telling at the moment when Eleanor says to him that she offered herself to the producer in order

that her chances on the stage might be enhanced. Michael begins to say that he can not believe this when Eleanor interrupts fiercely:

Oh yes, you can! You want to! You do! And you're glad! It makes me lower than you thought, but you're glad to know it just the same! You're glad because now you can really believe that—nothing ever happened between us! ...

CARE. No! You devil, you, you read thoughts into my mind!

(I, p. 197.)

The truth is that Michael finds it impossible for Eleanor to love anyone but himself. When Eleanor insists on her lie because the burden of his possessiveness has become intolerable, Michael, because of his pride again, can see her action only as one of revenge. "You did this out of hatred for me!" he cries. "You dragged our ideal in the gutter—with delight! And you pride yourself you've killed it. . . . But I tell you only a creator can really destroy! And I will! I will! I won't give your hatred the satisfaction of seeing our love live on in me—to torture me! I'll drag it lower than you! . . . I'll murder it—and be free!"

The above condemnations imply an intense hatred, and yet it is obvious that Michael and Eleanor love each other deeply. But Freud points out, in the same work quoted before in this analysis (p. 369), that one feature of the emotional life in narcissistic conditions is ambivalence. By this is meant that hostile and affectionate feelings are directed to one and the same person. Eleanor is sincere when she says to John, the producer, to whose apartment she goes after the quarrel:

We've quarreled, but never like this before. This was final. Oh, John for God's sake don't ask me! I want to forget! We tore each other to pieces. I realized I hated him! I couldn't restrain my hate! I had to crush him as he was crushing me! ... And so that was the end.

JOHN. You're sure, Nelly?

ELEANOR. (Alone) I hate him!

(IX, 1, p. 209.)

Michael is just as ardent in his hatred of his wife—and as unsuccessful in his attempt to "murder" love as is she. While Eleanor seeks to give herself to John, he seeks out a prostitute, for he believes, "Only facts kill—deeds! Then hate will let me alone."

Eleanor, being the weaker of the two, constantly feels her individuality invaded; and yet at the same time she resents any separateness in her husband. The conflict between her ego-instinct and sex-instinct is greater than it is in her husband, for he through his narcissistic nature combines the two instincts into a harmonious whole. His conflict lies in the fear that this harmony can not be maintained, that Eleanor who is the symbol thereof will seek a life outside his own. Eleanor explains her situation as follows: "It's so beautiful—and then—suddenly I'm being crushed. I feel a cruel presence in you paralyzing me, creeping over my body, possessing it so it's no longer my body—then grasping at some last inmost thing which makes me me—my soul—demanding to have that, too! I have to rebel with all my strength—seize any pretext! . . . And yet I love you! It's because I love you! If I'm destroyed, what is left to love you, what is left for you to love?"

After the experiences by which they successfully crucify each other, they are again driven back, each drawn by the fatal attraction that the one has for the other. Eleanor makes one more effort to leave her husband but she can not pass the door. Her passion is stronger than her intellect. Though her ego is defeated, she is "full of some happy certitude." But with Michael the triumph is not so complete as it might be. His intellect recognizes that instead of

victory there is defeat, for he says, "We've failed. . . We can live again! But we'll hate! And we'll torture and tear, and clutch for each other's souls!--fight--fail and hate again--but!--fail with pride--with joy!"

In the character of Michael, O'Neill has portrayed another dreamer, another idealist at war with reality. For him marriage is something that has nothing to do with the commonplace. He says, "We'd tend all our flame on an altar, not in a kitchen range!" In his "over-estimation" of the love object, a condition natural to his type, he idealizes Eleanor to the extent that his position becomes intolerable and she is forced to say to him, "Your ideal is too inhuman. Why can't you understand and be generous--be just!" This is what Anna might well have said to Burke. And like Robert, Michael must have his dream to satisfy the visionary in him, though the thinker in him acknowledges that each dream must perish in disillusionment when its day is ended. To his wife he cries ecstatically, "I love you! Forgive me all I've ever done, all I'll ever do." And Eleanor also realizes the futility of their happiness so long as it depends upon an ideal that is impossible; "You be happy! You ought to be! Isn't our future as hard as you could wish? Haven't we our old dreams back again?"

## ALL GOD'S CHILLEN GOT WINGS

All God's Chillen Got Wings presents the tragic theme, immemorial and ineradicable, of race prejudice. A first class negro marries a third class white woman who has been cast out by her own race. Jim wants to save her, for he has loved her ever since the two played together on the streets of lower New York. In her loneliness and misery, she accepts him as her last refuge. Only a negro of Jim's type could have sacrificed his life to her; only a woman of Ella's type, shoddy, cheap, unintelligent, could have revealed the tragic theme of the drama.

The antagonism between the races is made an issue in the early part of the play when it becomes the main factor in Jim's failure to pass the law examinations. Speaking of his five successive failures he says to Ella:

... but it hurts like fire. It brands me in my pride. I swear I know more'n any member of my class. I ought to, I study harder. I work like the devil. It's all in my head—all fine and correct to a T. Then when I'm called on—I stand up—all the white faces looking at me—and I can feel their eyes—I hear my own voice sounding funny, trembling—and all of a sudden it's all gone in my head—there's nothing remembered—and I hear myself stuttering—and give up—sit down—  
...

ELLA. Jim. It isn't worth it. You don't need to—

JIM. I need it more than anyone ever needed anything.  
I need it to live.

ELLA. What'll it prove?

JIM. Nothing at all much—but everything to me.

(I, 2, pp. 139-140.)

Jim, an intelligent, cultured negro, soon realized the bitter



struggle for existence that faced him when he thinks to compete intellectually with white men. The feeling of inferiority consequently grows strong within him. With this sense of inferiority, there awakes within him a desire for recognition, a determination to succeed in spite of his inferiority. In accordance with the psychology of Alfred Adler, the feeling of inferiority determines the goal of an individual's existence (Understanding Human Nature, p. 72). Having reached a "constant" of self-evaluation, Jim would compensate his feeling of inferiority by directing all his energy towards his goal—that of passing the bar examination.

But for the time being, Jim is willing to forego his compensatory activities and go abroad with Ella "where people are kind and wise to see the soul under skins." Ella, however, can not be happy in France for she takes with her her memories and instincts. Not only is Jim a victim to his feeling of inferiority, but to a far greater extent is Ella's life made tragic by this same cause. Not only is she an outcast morally, but also socially, for she has married a negro. She, too, seeks to alleviate her sense of inferiority through compensation. It is easy for her to assume a pose of superiority over Jim and his family. Speaking to Mattie, the sister, she says:

Yes, we both graduated from the same high school, didn't we? That was dead easy for me. Why I hardly even looked at a book. But Jim says it was awfully hard for him. He failed one year, remember?

JIM. Yes, it was hard for me, Honey.

ELLA. And the law school examinations Jim hardly ever could pass at all. Could you?

MATTIE. Yes, he could! He can! He'll pass them now—if you'll give him a chance!

JIM. Mattie!

But a moment later race hatred breaks out again. Ella speaks with scorn about a mask that Hattie has given Jim as a wedding present. Hattie insists that it is a work of art, made by an artist as great "as your Michael Angelo," and she forces Ella to take it.

ELLA. I'm not scared of it if you're not. Beautiful? Well, some people certainly have queer notions! It looks ugly to me and stupid—like a kid's game—making faces! Poo! You needn't look hard at me. I'll give you the laugh.

JIM. Maybe, if it disturbs you, we better put it in some other room.

ELLA. No. I want it here where I can give it the laugh! (Then turning suddenly to Hattie with aggressive determination) Jim's not going to take any more examinations! I won't let him!

HATTIE. Jim! Do you hear that? There's white justice!—their fear for their superiority!—

(II, 1, pp. 156-157.)

Left to herself in the room for a moment—a room which has been furnished for her occupancy by the two negro women, Hattie and her mother, Ella looks at a portrait of Jim's father:

It's his Old Man—all dolled up like a circus horse! Well, they can't help it. It's in the blood, I suppose. They're ignorant, that's all there is to it. (She moves to the mask—forcing a mocking tone) Hello, sport! Who'd you think you're scaring? Not me! I'll give you the laugh. He won't pass, you wait and see. Not in a thousand years!

(II, 1, p. 159.)

It can be clearly seen that Ella is facing a new situation since her marriage with Jim. He was her only friend; he respected and loved her when her own people turned from her in scorn. She in turn admired and even loved him, for, through his devotion to her, he made her feel secure, even respectable. And yet she can not forget that he is a negro; in the eyes of her people she has touched bottom. Her sense of inferiority makes her situation unbearable, for her personality can not

adjust itself to its external environment. Every new situation in life is a game with a set of rules which puts unusual stress and strain upon the adaptive powers of the personality. In Ella's case the player has difficulties with the rules of the game; the personality breaks under the strain of the new situation--marriage with a negro. Paranoid tendencies begin to develop which finally grow into an insidious and malignant insanity. In presenting the case of Ella, O'Neill again shows himself a profound psychologist.

Dr. Karl A. Menninger in describing paranoia writes (The Human Mind, p. 86):

[It] is characterized by a slowly progressing tendency to regard the whole world in the light of a system of delusions, chiefly delusions of persecution which enhance the importance of the ego. First a feeling of being slighted and unappreciated and then of being avoided and disregarded, then of being watched and pursued, then slandered, insidiously attacked, openly attacked, plotted against, etc.

The belief that the world is hostile towards her becomes fixed in Ella's mind immediately after the wedding ceremony when she and Jim step from the darkness of the church into the sunlight of the morning. On either side of the steps are two racial lines, one black, the other white. With rigid, unyielding eyes they watch her. She trembles; she can not take her eyes from the people; she is unable to move. Finally Jim succeeds in making her look up to the sky:

Look up, Honey! See the sun! Feel his warm eye lookin' down! Feel how kind he looks! ... We're all the same--equally just--under the sky--under the sun--under God--sailing over the sea--to the other side of the world--the side where Christ was born--the kind side that takes count of the soul. ... Let's not be late--let's get that steamer!

(I, 2, p. 145.)

In France the people were friendly enough, and for a time Ella found

peace. But it was not for long. After the return Jim tells Hattie that,

Ella didn't want to see nobody, she said just the two of us was enough. I was happy then--and I really guess she was happy, too--in a way--for a while. But she never did get to wanting to go out any place again. She got to saying she felt she'd be sure to run into someone she knew--from over here. So I moved us out to the country where no tourist ever comes--but it didn't make any difference to her. She got to avoiding the French folks the same as if they were Americans and I couldn't get it out of her mind. She lived in the house and got paler and paler, and more and more nervous and scarey, always imagining things--until I got to imagining things, too.

(II, I, p. 153.)

On the very day of her return from France, Ella looks out of the window, and to her joy she sees an old acquaintance. She throws open the window and calls to Shorty, then shrinks back on the floor as if she wanted to hide, her whole face in anguish.

Say! Say! I wonder?--No, he didn't hear you. Yes, he did, too! He must have! I yelled so loud you could have heard me in Jersey! ... He never heard a word, I tell you! He did, too! He didn't want to hear you! He didn't want to let anyone know he knew you! Why don't you acknowledge it? What are you lying about? ... He doesn't want to know you any more. No, not even him! ... Why? You know well enough! Because you married a--a--well, I won't say it, but you know without my mentioning names!

In terror Ella springs to her feet, shaking off her obsession; then whimpering like a frightened child,

Jim! Jim! Where are you? I want you Jim!

(II, I, pp. 159-160.)

As the struggle becomes too overpowering for an intellect so weak as Ella's, the disease makes striking inroads on her harassed mind. As Jim sits pouring over his law books, Ella slips into the room, carving-knife in hand, and fastens her eyes on him with a murderous

ELLA. Sensing something, Jim turns, jumps to his feet, and cries,

ELLA: For God's sake! Do you want to murder me? (She does not answer. He shakes her).

ELLA. (whispering) They kept calling me names as I was walking along—I can't tell you what, Jim--and then I grabbed a knife--

JIM. Yes! See! This! (She looks at it frightenedly.)

ELLA. Where did I--? I was having a nightmare--Where did they go--I mean, how did I get here? (With sudden terrified pleading--like a little girl) Oh, Jim--don't ever leave me alone! I have such terrible dreams, Jim--promise you'll never go away!

(II, 2, p. 167.)

The above quotation not only illustrates the advanced stage in the development of the mental disease, but it also is an excellent example of the type of dissociation psychologists call somnambulism. Whenever the stream of consciousness is suddenly broken across, says Dr. Hart in The Psychology of Insanity (pp. 45-46), the content of consciousness immediately after the break is absolutely independent of the content of consciousness in the moment preceding the break. The mind of the individual is filled with a new series of ideas while it is altogether ignorant of the ideas which occupied it a moment before. Here there is not a dissociation of consciousness into two separate simultaneously present portions, but a dissociation of the consciousness of one moment from the consciousness which preceded it. This type of dissociation is called somnambulism. Ella was about to murder Jim; a moment later she was entirely unaware of such an act, saying she grabbed the knife because people were calling her names.

Another example of this type of dissociation into which her mental conflict has led her follows closely upon the former one. Ella stands looking at Jim, fighting with herself. Her face becomes mean, vicious, full of jealous hatred. With a cruel, venomous grin she says, "You

dirty nigger!"

JIM. (startled as if he had been shot) Ella! For the good Lord's sake!

ELLA. Jim! Jim! Why are you looking at me like that?  
(II, 2, p. 169.)

All forms of dissociation, says Dr. Hart (Psychology of Insanity, p. 85), including somnambulism which O'Neill has so carefully depicted, indicate the presence of a mental conflict and acquire the significance of a defensive reaction adopted by the mind when confronted with two incompatible systems of ideas. Ella is torn between gratitude and an unconscious hatred; between the evaluation of the greatness of the man and the realization that he is a negro; between admiration for the man's determination to pass the bar examinations and her fear that he, a negro, will pass and so prove his equality with her own race.

Maybe he's passed! Maybe he's passed! No! No!  
He can't! I'd kill him! I'd kill myself!  
(Threatening the Congo mask) It's you who're to blame for this! Yes, you! Oh, I'm on to you.  
(Then appealingly) But why d'you want to do this to us! What have I ever done wrong to you? What has you got against me? I married you, didn't I? Why don't you let Jim alone? Why don't you let him be happy as he is—with me? Why don't you let me be happy? He's white, isn't he—the whitest man that ever lived? Where do you come in to interfere? Black! Black! Black as dirt! You've poisoned me! I can't wash myself clean! Oh, I hate you! I hate you! Why don't you let Jim and I be happy?

(II, 3, p. 171.)

Ella's passionate hatred of the negro mask again points to the dramatist's keen understanding of the psychological law that underlies her emotion. Ella would not for one moment admit that she hated Jim, the man who had taken her from degradation and surrounded her with his unselfish love; yet the hatred was there, a deep, ineradicable race hatred over which she had no control. But this feeling was repressed because it was incompatible with the deep affection which she enter-

tained for her husband. Through this attempt at repression the conflict within her did not reach its highest intensity. A repressed complex, states Bernard Hart (Psychology of Insanity, p. 102), often expresses itself in an indirect manner. Thus Ella's repressed hatred reaches consciousness by a devious route. The manifestation of her hatred is so distorted that its real origin in the taboored complex is no longer apparent to her. In hating the mask she does not realize that she is hating Jim. Therefore, when she learns from Jim that he has again failed his examinations she turns triumphantly to the mask:

There! What did I tell you? I told you I'd give you the laugh!

Then she plunges a knife through it and pins it to the table.

There! Who's got the laugh now?

Pointing tremblingly to the mask she says,

It's all right, Jim! It's dead. The devil's dead. See! It couldn't live--unless you passed. If you'd passed it would have lived in you. Then I'd have had to kill you, Jim, don't you see?--or it would have killed me. But now I've killed it. So you needn't ever be afraid any more, Jim.

(II, 3, p. 173.)

It has been seen that Ella sought to adjust herself to the new situation first by developing a feeling of superiority and then by dissociation. Both of these methods failed to compensate her feeling of inferiority. Finally at the close of the drama, she makes a third attempt at adaptation. She falls back into what is called psychic infantilism. Dr. Menninger (The Human Mind, p. 174) lists this condition as a failing compensation, a regression to a lower adaptation--that is, a partial failure to compensate in spite of strivings is relieved by permitting the whole mental organization to slip back into earlier, easier, and more irresponsible ways. The individual becomes childlike.

To the student of psychology, then it sounds convincing when O'Neill has Ella say,

Well, it's all over, Jim. Everything'll be all right now. I'll be just your little girl, Jim—and you'll be my little boy—just as we used to be, remember, when we were beaux; and I'll put shoe blacking on my face and pretend I'm black and you can put chalk on your face and pretend you're white just as we used to do—and we can play marbles—only you mustn't all the time be a boy. Sometimes you must be my old kind Uncle Jim who's been with us for years and years. Will you, Jim?

(II, 3, pp. 174-175.)

But even here in this mild, amiable form of insanity, in the last moments of the tragic drama where, just before the curtain falls on Jim's exalted cry—"Honey, Honey, I'll play right up to the gates of Heaven with you," once more the deep, sinister theme of the tragedy is heard—"Sometimes you must be my old kind Uncle Jim who has been with us for years and years." To the very end Ella clings to her feeling of race superiority; it alone sustains her.

In his willingness to play the rôle of Uncle Jim, the negro resigns himself to his inferior station against which he tried so hard to fight. But as Jim accepts the tragedy of his life, he receives illumination. "Forgive me, God, for blaspheming you!" he cries. "Let this fire of burning suffering purify me of selfishness and make me worthy of the child You send me for the woman You take away!" Jim in his self-abasement stands at the opposite pole from Michael Cape in his arrogant pride and exalted egoism.



## DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS

In Desire Under the Elms O'Neill vividly portrays a favorite theme, that of the deadly effect of the Puritan ideal, a theme again enlarged upon and more tragically presented in a later play, Mourning Becomes Electra. The title implies the theme, that of suppressed desire, hatred, and tragedy in the inhibited Puritan soul, for the elms themselves suggest the New England Puritan. Of them O'Neill says:

They bend their trailing branches down over the roof. They appear to protect and at the same time subdue. There is a sinister maternity in their aspect, a crushing, jealous absorption. They have developed from their intimate contact with the life of the man in the house an appalling humanness. They breed oppressively over the house. They are like exhausted women resting their sagging breasts and hands and hair on its roof, and when it rains their tears trickle down monotonously and rot on the shingles.

(p. 136.)

Under these strangely human elms is lived out a drama of personal relationships become intolerably tense because they are so intolerably close, a drama of souls confined to the limits of a rocky New England farm, souls which finally explode their narrow shell with the greatest violence. It is, moreover, a drama that presents this psychological truth: that the possessive instinct will grow unbelievably powerful if the opportunities for its gratification are too small; that physical passion will become destructive at last if it is too long restrained by a sense of sin.

The principal characters in this tragedy where souls are seared, twisted, tortured, and finally exalted are Ephraim Cabot, his sons

Simeon, Peter, and Eben, and his third wife, Abbie Putnam—characters in whose hearts burn fierce desires of lust, possession, lechery, blind rage, and murder. Though the desire to possess the stony farm is strong in all these characters, the passion burns fiercest in old Ephraim Cabot.

Ephraim is, first of all, a hard man. His face is as hard as if it were hewn out of a boulder. His eyes have a straining ingrowing quality—the quality one would expect to find in the eyes of those who have but one passion in life, whose vision never goes beyond the immediate object of their desire. Ephraim was a hard man by nature and yet some of this hardness was the result of determination—an excessive determination which acted as a mechanism of compensation. Ephraim admits that people hated him. To Abbie he says:

They laughed ... An' I growed hard. Folks kept  
allus sayin' he's a hard man like 'twas sinful  
t' be hard, so's at last I said back at 'em:  
Swal them, by thunder, ye'll git me hard an'  
see how ye like it!

(II, 2, p. 172.)

Undoubtedly he felt himself a social misfit, and this aroused within him a sense of inferiority, inferiority which could only be compensated by a determination to succeed by the very means that set him apart from others—his hardness. Of such individuals Menninger writes (The Human Mind, p. 212): "A certain idea will occur to them, a certain method, a certain objective, and no obstacle seems great enough to daunt them, no argument powerful enough to dissuade them."

With Ephraim this objective was to make a farm out of fields of stone, a task that had put weaker men underground.

Stones. I picked 'em up an' piled 'em into  
walls. Ye kin read the years o' my life in  
them walls, every day hafter stone, climbin'  
over the hills up and down, fencin' in the

fields that was mine, whar I'd made this's grow  
out o' nothin'—like the will o' God, like the  
servant o' His hand. It wa'n't easy. It was  
hard an' He made me hard fur it.

(II, 2, p. 172.)

And with this achievement comes a comforting thought, that he is like  
God. This idea also becomes a compensation mechanism which brings him  
the only satisfaction, aside from his pride in the farm, that the old  
man is ever to know in life. Early in his life the mechanism was  
already at work. Once he weakened, he left the stony farm for the West  
with its rich, black soil, but God said to him:

"This hain't with nothin' t' me. Git ye  
back t' him!"

And so he got himself back home because he believes that,

When ye kin make corn sprout out o' stones,  
God's livin' in yew! ...  
God's hard, not easy! God's in stones! Build  
my church on a rock—out o' stones an' I'll be  
in them!

(II, 2, p. 172.)

Later God directs him once more towards the hard and stony path. When  
old Ephraim is tempted to go to the gold fields of California and then  
suddenly finds his little pile of savings gone, he consoles himself  
by this ever ready compensatory thought:

It hain't fur me. I kin hear His voice warnin'  
me agen t' be hard an' stay on my farm. I kin  
see His hand usin' Eben t' steal t' keep me from  
weakness. I kin feel I be in the palm o' His  
hand. His fingers guidin' me. It's a-goin' t'  
be lonesomer now than ever it war afore—an'  
I'm gittin' old, Lord—ripe on the bough ...  
Eben—what d' ye want? God's lonesome, hain't  
He? God's hard an' lonesome!

(III, 4, p. 205.)

Perhaps it would be forcing the point to say that Ephraim is  
suffering from what psychologists call the Jehovah complex; it is  
more just to say that this very fantasy of his makes him, inhuman as  
he seems at times, more human. For all of us, certain favourite

fantasy themes persist to comfort and support us in a world where hard realities hurt us, especially in our peculiarly tender spots. For Ephraim, his stern Puritanic religion is an escape from the reality of life through the doorway of self-denial and flagellation. But severe as it is, it leads to a satisfying reward—identification with God himself.

If one studies carefully the character of Ephraim Cabot, one may well arrive at the conclusion that he is what is technically called schizoid. This type of personality is analysed by Menninger (The Human Mind, p. 80) in the following manner:

Schizoid is a word derived from the same Greek stem as "scissors." It means split or broken. The implication is that the queerness of these folk represents a break or split in the internal harmony of the personality so that an external disharmony also results and the schizoid person is noticeably out of tune with the rest of the world.

Ephraim is an insensitive, heartless, ruthless, cruel individual who well deserves the hatred of his sons. For the single object that has absorbed his life—turning a barren hillside into a farm—he has sacrificed two wives and the affection of three sons whose lives he filled with unending toil and merciless persecution. Though they poured their very blood into the land, the old man can not understand why these sons covet what is his, and he has enough hatred for them within his withered soul to say to Abbie when she reminds him that he can not take his farm with him when he dies,

No. I calc'late not. But if I could, I would, by the Eternal! 'R if I could, in my dyin' hour, I'd set it afire an' watch it burn--this house an' every ear o' corn an' every tree down t' the last blade o' hay! I'd sit an' knee it was all a-dyin' with me an' no one else'd ever own what was mine, what I'd made out o' nothin' with my own sweat'n' blood! (A pause---then he adds with a queer affec-

tion) "Captin' the cows. Then I'd turn free.  
(II, 1, p. 168.)

"Captin' the cows." And in these three words spoken with strange kindness lies the key to the old man's personality. Again and again there are little phrases which amaze one because they hint at a duality that one never expected. It is they that mark Ephraim as schisoid. He looked at the world, found it bitter, fought it with an even greater bitterness, and retreated into an inner, unseen life.

Of this inner life there are occasional glimpses. That none of his wives could ever understand Ephraim and that consequently he was "allus lonesome" is an early sign of his dual personality. Hard as he is, he yet senses a greater hardness, a more sinful passion, in this third woman he married—a second proof that there is some virtue in the man. To Abbie he says:

Ye give me the shills sometimes. It's cold in this house. It's uneasy. They's thin's pokin' about in the dark—in the corners.

ABBIE. Whar air ye goin' ?

CABOT. (queerly) Down whar it's restful—whar it's warm—down t' the barn. (Bitterly) I kin talk t' the cows. They know. They know the farm an' me. They'll give me peace.

(II, 1, p. 174.)

And often, staring up at the sky, he says, "Purty, hain't it?" At one time he adds,

I'd like t' own my place up thar. I'm gittin' old, Abbie. I'm gittin' ripe on the bough. It's allus lonesome cold in the house—even whan it's bilin' hot outside. Hain't yew noticed? ... It's wa'm down t' the barn—nice smellin' an' warm—with the cows. Cows is queer.

(II, 1, p. 167.)

Oddly enough in the end, when the tragedy has taken place, when his wife has murdered the baby she bore him, it is Ephraim who sheds tears for the unfortunate infant as he says with strange emotion,

"He's dead, sort'n . I falt his heart. Pore little critter." It is these glimpses into the heavily veiled interior of the bitter man's soul that make him convincing when he says to his wife after learning that her lover has run to the sheriff with the report of her crime:

Ye'd ought t' love me. I'm a man. If ye'd loved me, I'd never told no Sheriff on ye no matter what ye did, if they was t' bribe me alive!

He suddenly becomes old and weary as he adds despairingly,

God A'mighty, I be lonesomer'n ever!

(III, 4, p. 201.)

In Ephraim Cabot, O'Neill has presented a psychologically sound character of the schizoid type, a cruel man possessed of one mad passion, who sought compensation in an affinity with a God made in his own hard likeness; yet a man in whose inner depths lurk emotions oddly out of keeping with his hard exterior. The components of his personality, his insane passion for his farm, his longing to be understood, his bitter lonesomeness, are expressed in these surprising words addressed to Abbie:

Sometimes ye air the farm an' sometimes the farm be yew. That's why I clove t' ye in my lonesomeness. Me an' the farm has got t' beget a son!

(II, 2, p. 171.)

One is inclined to wonder if in this last sentence O'Neill is not interpreting the fetish Ephraim has made of his farm in the Freudian manner with all its sexual significance! Yet André Tridon in his volume called Psychoanalysis and Love (p. 24) says that a fetish may be of a non-physical kind, that even a profession may be a fetish, or a mental attitude, in short anything which at one time might have been a source of safety, comfort, or egotistical gratification. Ephraim's passion for the farm is easily explained, then, for in it lay his only *raison d'être*.

\* \* \* \*

In the light of the personality of the father which has just been discussed, the personalities of the sons become clear. Professor Murphy, in discussing theories of personality, sums up Freud's theory in the following words (General Psychology, p. 603): "Freud believes that what we call personality is largely the result of social contacts and social pressures. A child from earliest infancy is shaped into the pattern of the family, and the social, religious, and national groups to which the parents belong." This is deterministic philosophy—a philosophy which has become a part of modern thought. Man is what he is because of his heredity and environment, and every action has its definite cause, which, in its turn, was caused, until the whole of man's life is an endless chain of causes and effects. This theory is expounded again and again in the plays of O'Neill; in them he has given artistic expression to this particular trend of contemporary thought. In this philosophy lies the whole tragic import of his plays. It is this emphasis upon deterministic philosophy that makes his plays logically, emotionally, and psychologically sound. It has just been shown that old Ephraim Cabot was a man possessed of a single obsession, an obsession that determined his character but which was aided therein by such factors, equally deterministic, as his innate hardness, his religion, and his environment. The three sons of Ephraim, granted the character of the father and the narrow confines of their surroundings, acquire personalities in no less a deterministic manner.

Murphy says (General Psychology, p. 28) that the habits acquired during the lifetime of any creature tend to be transmitted to its progeny. One is not surprised, then, to find a strong possessive instinct in these three sons. Though they are now middle aged men,

they suffer the cruelty and domination of a father who has reduced them to the status of slaves. Why? Because in the end they hope to inherit the farm into which went their labor. Eben, the youngest, feels he has a greater right to the land than his two half-brothers, Simeon and Peter. As the two sit talking of California and their desire to share its gold, Eben says,

... Ye won't never go because ye'll wait here fur  
yer share o' the farm, thinkin' allus he'll die soon.

SIMEON. We've a right.

PETER. Two-thirds belongs t' us.

EBEN. Ye've no right! She wa'n't yewr Maw! It was her  
farm! Didn't he steal it from her? She's dead.  
It's my farm.

(I, 1, p. 142.)

Ephraim's passion for the farm is only rivaled by that of Eben. When Eben finds that his father has married again and that this woman now looks upon the farm with possessive eyes, his fury knows no bounds. With hatred he insults Abbie who has referred to her recent marriage:

An' bought yew—like a harlot. An' the price  
he's payin' ye—this farm—was my Maw's, damn  
ye!—an' mine now!

(I, 4, p. 160.)

And a little later he defies her with his frank intention, glowering with hatred:

I'm fightin' him—fightin' yew—fightin' fur  
Maw's rights t' her hum! An' I'm onto ye. Ye  
hain't foolin' me a mite. Ye're ainin' t' swaller  
up everythin' an' make it your'n. Waa! you'll  
find I'm a heap sight bigger hunk nor yew kin  
chew!

(I, 4, p. 161.)

But this desire to own the farm is only one characteristic that the sons inherited from the father and developed through the influence of their environment. Freud believes that it is the tendency of the boy to identify himself with the father, to compete with him in vague



desires, which leads to an inevitable conflict (Introductory Lectures, p. 126). Of this bitter struggle between father and sons, Cabot himself speaks;

They hated me 'cause I was hard. I hated them 'cause they was soft. They coveted the farm without knowin' what it meant. It made me bitter'n wormwood. It aged me--then coveting what I'd made fur mine.

(II, 1, p. 173.)

What could be more expressive of the hatred Eben feels for his father than this remark which he makes to his brothers:

I got a notion he's gittin' near--I kin feel him comin' on like yew kin feel malaria chill afore it takes ye.

(I, 4, p. 150.)

This hate component for the father already present in infancy is in no way repressed and becomes a manifestation of the adult personality of these men. Part of this hatred for the father is directed to the Puritan God who is on such intimate terms with the object of their hate, who is constantly being called upon to aid in their punishment. Eben cries out;

Yew'n' your God! Allus cussin' folks --allus naggin' 'em!

CABOT. (summoningly) God o' the ole! God o' the lonesome!

EBEN. (mockingly) Naggin' His sheep t' sin! T' hell with your God!

(I, 4, p. 161.)

Cabot's doctrine of work, the teachings of a religion that constantly threatened eternal damnation for the least infringement of its laws, and the social isolation on the rocky farm, all brought about the repression of normal instincts, emotions, and vitality. So strong are these feelings and so weak the repression mechanism that an explosion is inevitable. Revolt against the God representation of this

religion has just been noted; revolt against the father is demonstrated by Simeon's and Peter's departure for the gold fields of California; and revolt against the social and moral laws is about to take place in Eben's pent up soul where lust and passion struggle against the weakening bonds of inhibition.

It should be noted in passing that the gold fields of California are a symbol of revolt against this hard life for each of the Cabots. No matter how inhibited, how repressed the human soul may be, it yet has its dream of freedom. Looking at the sunset Peter says:

Well—in a manner o' speakin'—thar's the promise.  
Gold in the sky—in the West—Golden Gate—  
California! —Goldest West—fields o' gold!

SIMEON. Fortunes layin' just atop o' the ground waitin'  
t' be picked! Solomon's mines, they say!

(I, I, p. 138.)

There is an echo of this in the incoherent cries that come from Eben when he learns that Abbie has killed their son. Reality has become too much for him; he, too, must find escape in the dream.

But I'll take vengeance now! I'll git the Sheriff!  
I'll tell him everythin'! Then I'll sing "I'm off  
to Californ'—a!" an' go—gold—Golden Gate—gold  
sun—fields o' gold in the West!

(III, 3, p. 198.)

And old Ephraim is none the less horrified at human monstrosities. Upon finding that his wife is faithless and that she has murdered her innocent babe, reality, even though it includes his beloved farm, becomes a slough of snick; he must renounce it and find peace in the place which his hungry soul has idealized.

I couldn't work today. I couldn't take no interest.  
T' hell with the farm! I'm leavin' it! I've  
turned the cows an' other stock loose! I've driv  
'em into the woods whar they kin be free! By freein'  
'em, I'm freein' myself! I'm quittin' here today!  
I'll set fire t' house an' barn, an' I'll will the  
fields back t' God, so that nothin' human kin never

touch 'em! I'll be a--goin' to Californi--a t'  
jine Simeon an' Peter--true sons o' mine if they  
be dumb fools--an' the Cabots 'll find Solomon's  
 Mines t'gether!

(III, 4, p. 204.)

It is hard to kill the human soul, no matter how harshly censured are  
its dreams by inhibitions aided by the reality of toil. This is what  
Peter means when, speaking of his father to Eben, he says,

He's slaved himself t' death. He's slaved Sim  
'n' me 'n' yew t' death--on'y none of us hain't  
died--git.

(II, 2, p. 141.)

Underneath the stern repression, Abbie, a creature of passion,  
sees the seething struggle in Eben's heart. She predicts that nature  
will win over inhibition:

Ye been fightin' yer nature ever since the day I  
come--tryin' t' tell yerself I hain't purty t' ye.  
Hain't the sun strong an' hot? Ye kin feel it  
burnin' into the earth--Nature--makin' thin's grow--  
bigger 'n' bigger--burnin' inside ye--makin' ye want  
t' grow--into somethin' else ... Nature 'll beat ye,  
Eben. Ye might 's well own up t' it fast 's last!

(II, 1, p. 164.)

But can he ward off nature by avowing his hatred for Abbie. Time and  
again he cries out, "I hate t' sight O' yew!" Eben here illustrates  
Freud's statement (Psychoanalysis and Love, p. 73) that an extravagant  
display of hatred is generally a desperate attempt of the person in-  
dulging in that display to repress a love which would be unjustifiable  
or detrimental for the personality. With Eben it is more the question  
of the farn. Abbie desires the thing he has coveted all his life.  
Now, then, can he love her? This love he succeeds for a time to  
repress but in the end his passion bursts the restraining force and he  
falls on his knees before Abbie with the words,

Am' I love yew, Abbie! --now I kin say it! I  
been dyin' fur want o' ye--every hour since ye  
come! I love ye!

(II, 4, p. 179.)

O'Neill, in presenting Eben's passion at this point as far stronger than it ever was before, illustrates very nicely the point Freud makes when he says the instinct develops in a more unchecked and luxuriant fashion if it is withdrawn by repression from conscious influence; that it ramifies like a fungus in the dark and takes on extreme forms of expression which, when revealed, surprise one by the way in which they reflect an extraordinary and dangerous strength of instinct (Collected Papers, vol. IV, p. 87). This increase of passion is plainly seen by Abbie. She says,

Look at yer eyes! They's lust fur me in 'em,  
burnin' 'em up! Look at yer lips now! They're  
tremblin' an' longin' t' kiss me, an' yer teeth  
t' bite!

(II, 2, p. 175.)

Unconsciously or consciously, Eben felt within him the futility of his effort to repress his feeling for Abbie. This feeling, this knowledge that his repression mechanism was weakening, made him set up a substitution-formation which was manifested in his frequent expressions of hatred towards Abbie. This is again in keeping with Freud's view, for he says that it is not the repression itself which produces substitute-formations and symptoms, but that these latter constitute indications of a return of the repressed (Collected Papers, vol. IV, p. 93). Never does Eben express his hatred for Abbie so violently as just before he breaks into his passionate avowal of love for her. In wild passion he threatens, "Git out afore I murder ye!"

By way of summarizing the repression mechanism in Eben, it is interesting to see on what sound psychological basis O'Neill has constructed his study. Why should Eben want to repress his instinct towards Abbie since it is a pleasurable one? Freud says that pain must accompany the gratification of an instinct in order that it be repressed.

He also says that satisfaction of the instinct is pleasurable in itself but irreconcilable with other claims and purposes; that it therefore causes pleasure in one part of the mind and 'pain' in another. A condition of repression is that the element of avoiding 'pain' acquires more strength than the pleasure of gratification (Collected Papers, vol. IV, p. 35). For the time being Eben's desire to possess the land was stronger than his lust for Abbie. The latter caused him pain, for the woman he loved also desired the land. Repression of his passion for her was the only alternative. But repression is successful only if the instinct vanishes from consciousness (Collected Papers, vol. IV, p. 51). This requirement demands too great an effort for one in whom lust for the flesh is so strong, and Eben's attempt at repression fails in the manner that has just been noted.

\* \* \*

Abbie Putnam makes no attempt to restrain her passion, for with her the satisfaction of the sexual instinct is preeminent. However, the acquisitive instinct is so strong within her that she will assure her claim to the farm by a daring trick. She will stop at nothing to give Ephraim a son to whom, as a part of himself, he can leave his property, without ceasing to own it, if by so doing she can wrest the farm from the other two rivals for its possession, namely, Ephraim and Eben. With this purpose in mind, she makes overt advances toward Eben who has a strong physical attraction for her.

In the presentation of Abbie, O'Neill has portrayed a certain type of woman to an admirable degree. "I hold that there are two kinds of women: saints and sinners, mothers and prostitutes. The former are pure, sexless, dull, and good; the latter are wicked, passionate,

interesting, and utterly taboo." (The quotation is taken from Menninger, The Human Mind, p. 527.) This same opinion was first stated by Otto Weininger in Sex and Character (p. 215). Abbie Putnam is an excellent example of the prostitute type described by the German psychologist (Sex and Character, p. 228):

She gives free play to the fulfilment [sic] of her desire, and feels a queen, and her most ardent wish is for more power. ... The only thought that disturbs her is the possibility of losing her power. She expects, and cannot think otherwise than that every man wishes to possess her, that they think of nothing but her, and live for her. And certainly she possesses the greatest power over men, the only influence that has a strong effect on the life of humanity that is not ordered by the regulations of men.

This great power that Abbie has over Eben is best displayed in Part II, scene 2. As usual, she and Eben have been quarreling. Baraged by Eben's interest in a woman acknowledged to be a prostitute, Abbie cries:

Did ye think I was in love with ye—a weak thin' like yew? Not much! I on'y wanted ye fur a purpose o' my own—an' I'll hev ye fur it yet 'cause I'm stronger 'n yew be! ... I'm a-goin' t' make all this hum my hum! They's one room hain't mine yet, but it's a-goin' t' be tonight. I'm a-goin' down now an' light up! Won't ye come courtin' me in the best parlor, Mister Cabot? ... (... her eyes are fixed on him so burningly that his will seems to wither before hers. He stands swaying towards her helplessly.) Then (holding his eyes and putting all her will into her words as she backs out the door) I'll expect ye afore long, Eben.

And Eben, like a man hypnotized, follows Abbie, and before the scene closes falls on his knees and releasing all his pent-up passion cries, "I love yew, Abbie!"

(Quoting again from Weininger (p. 233), one finds the picture of Abbie enlarged upon. "The prostitute is the great seductress of the world, the female Don Juan, the being in the woman that knows the art

of love, that cultivates it, teaches it, and enjoys it." To make Eben love her, Abbie poses as his mother, the mother that comforted and consoled him when he was a child and for whom he still retained a deep love. Throwing her arms about him in wild passion she says,

Don't cry, Eben! I'll take yer Maw's place!  
I'll be everythin' she was t' ye! Let me kiss  
ye, Eben!

And when he would resist she adds,

Don't be afeared! I'll kiss ye pure, Eben—  
same's if I was a Maw t' ye—an' ye kin kiss me  
back 's if yew was my son—my boy—sayin' good-  
night t' me! Kiss me, Eben. (Then kiss in  
restrained fashion. Then suddenly wild passion  
overcomes her. She kisses him lustfully, again  
and again and he flings his arms about her and  
returns her kisses.)

When he would tear himself away she pleads,

Don't ye leave me Eben! Can't ye see it hain't  
enuf—'lovin' ye like a Maw—can't ye see it's  
got t' be that an' more—much more—a hundred  
times more—fur me t' be happy—fur yew t' be  
happy?

(II, 3, pp. 176-179.)

Her last sentence is truly characteristic of her type. Her happiness is of first importance "The Prostitute absorbs everything for herself" (Weininger, p. 233).

The meaning of this statement is magnified a hundred-fold towards the end of the play. For the mother type the child is everything; for the prostitute type the lover is the whole world (Weininger, p. 232). When Eben has been led to believe by his father that Abbie purposely seduced him in order to get from him a child whereby she might in turn take from him the coveted farm, his love turns to intense hatred. He tells her that he loathes her, that he is through with her, that he will leave her for the gold fields of California. She clings to him and with passionate earnestness, referring to the baby, pleads:

If I could make it—'s if he'd never come up between us—if I could prove t' ye I wa'n't schemin' t' steal from ye—so's everythin' could be jist the same with us, lovin' each other jist the same, kissin' an' happy the same's we've been happy afore he come—if I could do it—ye'd love me agen, wouldn't ye? Ye'd kiss me agen? Ye wouldn't never leave me, would ye?

EBEN. I calc'late not. But ye hain't God, be ye?

ABBIE. (exultantly) Remember ye've promised! (Then with strange intensity) Habbie I kin take back one thin' God does!

(III, 2, p. 195.)

Abbie goes in and kills her baby to win back her lover. Here is the ultimate test that marks her as a preeminent example of the prostitute type of woman. Only by his endeavor to paint the type in its extreme form can O'Neill be justified in developing the action of the play as he does.

"The great prostitute and the great tribune are firebrands causing destruction all around them, leaving death and devastation in their paths, and pass like meteors unconnected with the course of human life, indifferent to its objects ... " (Weininger, p. 251). Horrified at first by her crime, Eben tells the sheriff; then comes repentance and an awakening of his love for the woman. In the end he determines to be her accomplice, and so together the two are doomed to tragedy while Ephraim is left the barrenness of lonely triumph.

In a sense the drama does not end on a tragic note. Eben and Abbie have drunk deep of the draught of life and passion, and they have no regrets; they have thus passed out of the realm of tragedy. Their romance has raised them above the sordidness of their surroundings. Having thrust aside their Puritanical repressions, they have no consciousness of, nor regret for, their sin. "I don't repent that sin! I hain't askin God t' fergive that!" cries Abbie, and Eben echoes, "Nor



men." In breaking through the bounds of a religion hateful to them,  
they find the light of happiness that even prison walls can not  
darken.

## XVI

### "MARCO MILLIONS"

Since the whole spirit of "Marco Millions" is satirical, one expects to find a certain exaggeration of character and incident which is intentional on the part of the author. This drama, then, by its very nature excludes itself from psychological analysis; only where one finds a normal treatment of human nature can the laws of psychology be applied to measure the writer's understanding of the factors that underlie the thoughts and feelings and actions of men.

What interest of a psychological nature there is to be found in "Marco Millions" lies in the overdevelopment of Marco Polo's acquisitive instinct. This instinct becomes the driving power that is to assure for him an ideal of superiority, the goal towards which he, as well as every other individual, according to Adler, is striving. O'Neill, at the beginning of the play, pictures Marco as a normal boy, somewhat idealistic, romantic in his love for Donata, sensitive in his love of beauty, considerate in his relations to others, and more or less indifferent to the materialism symbolized by his father and his uncle. But the character of the young man is soon changed through the tutorship of Nicole and Maffeo. With the ideal of profit directing his thoughts and actions, certain phenomena take place; the gentle sweetness of his character gives way to oppression, to minimizing and undervaluing others. Through the exaggeration of such an ideal, Adler says in his Individual Psychology (p. 9) that "traits of character such as intolerance, dogmatism, envy, pleasure at the misfortunes of others, conceit

boastfulness, mistrust, avarice,—in short all those attitudes that are the substitutes for a struggle, force their way through to a far greater extent, in fact, than self-preservation demands." Most of these characteristics are found in Marco's later character. Of him Kublai says:

He has not even a mortal soul, he has only an acquisitive instinct. We have given him every opportunity to learn. He has memorized everything and learned nothing. He has looked at everything and seen nothing. He has lustred for everything and loved nothing. He is only a shrewd and crafty greed.

(II, 1, p. 251.)

Not only do human values no longer exist for the man himself, but he would rule them out of the lives of the men he governs. Chu-Yin says to Kublai:

I talked recently with a poet who had fled from there [the city Marco governed] in horror. Yang-Chau used to have a soul, he said. Now it has a brand new Court House. And another, a man of wide culture, told me, our Christian mayor is exterminating our pleasures and our rats as if they were twin breeds of vermin!

(II, 1, p. 251.)

Under the influence of his profit ideal, Marco becomes a selfish, conceited bigot who can not see the beauty and wisdom of the oriental world. To him, as to his uncle, "all Mahometans are crazy." The one passion of his cramped soul is the pursuit of wealth, and to this end he endures hardships, endangers his life, and jeopardizes his health. Every action, every feeling, and every thought harmonizes with his goal—that of achieving superiority through wealth. In the end Marco reaches his goal; he returns to Venice with millions in gold and accordingly receives the adulation of the mob. Of love and human understanding he has not learned the first principles.

Over against the greed of the Western world is set the philosophy

and culture of the East. As Marco Polo represents the Occident, so Kublai represents the Orient. In his affirmation of life the Eastern monarch resembles Lazarus. The philosophy of life as expressed in the following words by Kublai would not be foreign to that exponent of life:

Contemplate the eternal life of life! Pray thus!  
 In silence—for one concentrated moment—be proud  
 of life! Know in your heart that the living life  
 can be noble! Know that the dying of death can  
 be noble! Be exalted by life! Be inspired by  
 death! Be humbly proud! Be proudly grateful!  
 Be immortal because life is immortal. Contain the  
 harmony of tomb and grave within you! Possess life  
 as a lover—then sleep requited in the arms of  
 death! If you awake, love again! If you sleep on,  
 rest in peace! Who knows which? What does it  
 matter? It is nobler not to know!

(III, 1, p. 301.)

Kublai has learned the meaning of life while Marco has gained only  
 millions.

## THE GREAT GOD BROWN

The Great God Brown is a drama telling in a pulsing, lyrical manner of man's aspirations, of his effort to identify himself with nature, of his conflict with materialism that tries to tear to shreds the poet soul within him. Beneath the semi-realistic treatment given the theme, there is a deep note of allegory. O'Neill sees beyond suffering and into the mystery through which "the eternal laughter of heaven is born from the tears of the earth"; and so he attempts to paint the soul struggles of one who "got paint on his paws in an endeavor to see God." The dramatist himself tells us that the conflicting tides in the soul of Man are to serve as a background of mystery which is within and behind his characters, which gives them a significance beyond themselves, forcing itself through them to expression in mysterious words, symbols, and actions they do not themselves comprehend. "And that is as clearly as I wish an audience to comprehend it. It is Mystery—the mystery any one man or woman can feel but not understand as the meaning of any event—or accident—in any life on earth" (Clark, Eugene O'Neill, p. 162).

It seems, then, in view of this wish on the part of the author, that if the drama is to be analysed, the basis for such an analysis should be philosophical rather than psychological. Yet it is a play which deals with personality and life. In his explanation of the tragedy, O'Neill says (Clark, p. 160):

Dion Anthony—Dionysus and St. Anthony—the creative pagan acceptance of life, fighting eternal war with the masochistic, life-denying

spirit of Christianity as represented by St. Anthony—the whole struggle resulting in this modern day in mutual exhaustion—creative joy in life for life's sake frustrated, rendered abortive, distorted by morality from Pan into Satan, into a Mephistopheles mocking himself in order to feel alive; Christianity, once heroic in martyrs for its intense faith now pleading weakly for intense belief in anything, even Godhead itself. (In the play it is Cybele, the pagan Earth Mother, who makes the assertion with authority: "Our Father, Who Art!" to the dying Brown, as it is she who tries to inspire Dion Anthony with her certainty in life for its own sake.)

This explanation of the character of Dion points to a duality of character that at once interests the psychologist. The St. Anthony in Dion, the man behind the mask, is a spiritual, poetic, supersensitive being with a childlike, religious faith in life; one who reads from the New Testament, "Come unto me all ye who are heavy laden and I will give you rest," and who then wistfully whispers, "I will come—but where are you, Savior?" The Dionysus in the man is at first a sensual young Pan, a part assumed to act as an armor for the him who "was born without a skin"; a Pan who loves life, who is life, who says to Margaret, "Be born! Awake! Live! Dissolve into dew—into silence—into night—into earth—into space—into peace—into meaning—into joy—into God—into the Great God Pan!" A Pan who laughs at the pleading St. Anthony with mockery and contempt, "Blah! Fixation on old Mama Christianity! You infant blubbering in the dark, you!"

O'Neill would, then, have us understand that Dion represents a struggle between two personalities, that the mask represents one tendency in his character as definitely as his face the other. Such duality implies a disintegration of character, a curious split, a depth and a surface, or what psychologists term a schisoid personality. It is of great interest from the point of view of the psychologist to note how well O'Neill understands the principles that underlie the

modern theory of integration, a theory set forth by McDougall in the following statements (Outline of Abnormal Psychology, pp. 525-526):

If a unitary personality is to be achieved, the various sentiments must be brought into one system within which their impulses shall be harmonized, each duly subordinated to the higher integration of which it becomes a member. This higher integration is what we call "character"; it is achieved by the development of a master sentiment which dominates the whole system of sentiments, subordinating their impulses to its own ... There may be two or more master sentiments of divergent tendencies (such as love of learning and love of wealth) and then conflict is inevitable and the way is prepared for division of the personality.

This is what O'Neill makes the basis of Dion's character, this striving of two master sentiments within one being; the one setting as its goal joy in life for life's sake, the other striving to attain peace through intense religious faith.

The cause of this doubling of the personality is found in an early incident of childhood. Dion describes the incident himself:

One day when I was four years old, a boy sneaked up behind when I was drawing a picture in the sand he couldn't draw and hit me on the head with a stick and kicked out my picture and laughed when I cried. It wasn't what he'd done that made me cry, but him! I had loved and trusted him and suddenly the good God was disapproved in his person and the evil and injustice of Man was born. Every one called me a cry-baby, so I became silent for life and designed a mask of the Bad Boy Pan in which to live and rebel against that other boy's God and protect myself from His cruelty.

(II, 3, p. 346.)

Since the break in the personality hinged on an ethical basis, it became all the more decisive. On this point Dr. T. E. Mitchell writes:

And since it is on the organisation and systematisation of ethical interests and purposes, on the unity of the moral character, that the attainment of personality in its highest expression depends, any lack of integration affecting this aspect of mental development will reveal itself as a want of unity more marked than that which arises from

defect of the integrative process in other directions. Under certain circumstances it may lead to the most startling transformations that human personality can undergo. (Medical Psychology and Psychical Research, 1922, quoted by McDougall, Outline of Abnormal Psychology, p. 528.)

Emphasis on the great divergence between the St. Anthony and the Dionysus in the man marks O'Neill again as being psychologically sound.

Dion after his childhood experience intended to have but one goal, to be Pan, to rebel against God, to protect himself from His cruelty. But the need of a God was too strong within the artist's sensitive soul, and thus the original goal remained. Conflict now became inevitable, and the way was prepared for a division of personality. The man in Dion that sought delight in life, free from all moral restraints, enjoyed the pleasures of the world to the limit. Margaret, when she finally finds her husband after looking for him for days, cries:

Thank goodness I've found you! Why haven't you been home the last two days? It's bad enough your drinking again without your staying away and worrying us to death!

(II, 2, p. 342.)

Yet it is the Christian martyr in Dion that answers her, saying,

Behold your man—the sniveling, cringing, life-denying Christian slave you have so nobly ignored in the father of your sons. Look!

And he tears the mask from his face, radiant with a great, pure love for her.

O woman—my love—that I have sinned against in my sick pride and cruelty—forgive my sins—forgive my solitude—forgive my sickness—forgive me!

(II, 2, p. 343.)

These, indeed, are words in keeping with the St. Anthony who was reading a short time before the Imitation of Christ by Thomas à Kempis:

"Quickly must thou be gone from hence, see then how matters stand with thee. Ah, fool—learn now



to die to the world that thou mayst begin to live with Christ! Do now, beloved, do now all thou canst because thou knowst not when thou shalt die; nor does thou know what shall befall thee after death. Keep thyself as a pilgrim, and a stranger on earth, to whom the affairs of this world do not—belong! Keep thy heart free and raised upwards to God because thou hast not here a lasting abode. 'Because at what hour you know not the Son of Man will come!'" Amen.

Then to his mask he says, tenderly,

Peace poor tortured one, brave pitiful pride  
of man, the hour of our deliverance comes.  
Tomorrow we may be with Him in Paradise!

(II, 2, pp. 541-542.)

Perhaps nowhere in the play does the dual personality of Dion appear so distinctly as in these words addressed by the saint in him to the devil that dwells there also.

The passage just quoted illustrates equally well another principle involved in the theory of disintegration, that O'Neill seems to understand so clearly. We are told by McDougall (Outline of Abnormal Psychology, p. 538) that this master sentiment, whose undisputed authority makes for integration, is made up of two fundamental impulses or dispositions—that of self-assertion and that of submission. When these two sentiments become divorced, they become master sentiments, each forming the nucleus of a partial, one-sided personality. So in Dion the St. Anthony personality represents a nucleus of impulses gathered about the master sentiment of submission, while the Dionysus personality represents other impulses mustered about the second controlling sentiment, self-assertion. His self-assertiveness is spoken of by Dion himself. He says to Brown,

When Pan was forbidden the light and warmth of the sun, he grew sensitive and self-conscious and proud and revengeful—and became the Prince of Darkness.

(II, 3, p. 548.)

"The Prince of Darkness!" This, indeed, proclaims the tragedy that has befallen Dionysus. The goal that Pan set for himself, joy in life for life's sake, is soon frustrated. Pan becomes Satan. Nor does St. Anthony more successfully reach his goal. The ascetic that he has become prays fervently, "Into thy hands, O Lord." Then, with a sudden look of horror he is compelled to admit, "Nothing! To feel one's life blown out like the flame of a cheap match ... !" Tragedy again—the tragedy of bitter disillusionment. In the end the saint has even forgotten the prayer and asks weakly and childishly, "What was the prayer, Billy?" And Brown prompts, "Our Father who art in Heaven."

In the modern world of today where conventions set a standard of living, a standard so contrary to life itself that it can be upheld only through hypocrisy, neither the pagan nor the Christian way of living can culminate in joy or peace or satisfaction.

\* \* \* \*

The character of Brown, as O'Neill first represents him, is molded in accordance with the conventional standard that was so heinous to Dion. He does not wear a mask in the early part of the play because he lives a mask. He refuses to recognize within himself the existence of another personality which has for its goal the things Dion has—artistic genius, aliveness, Margaret, and even the strange friendship of Cybel, the prostitute. Though he would destroy Dion, his friend, he believes himself virtuous, helpful, forgiving. For Brown there is no life apart from that which is measured by dollars and cents. He is a good capitalist, and he has won the praise and adulation of those who worship at the altar of Gold, or at the altar of the Great God Brown. So far the character of Brown represents an integrated personal-

ity, imperfect as it is. McDougall says (Outline of Abnormal Psychology, p. 528): "In the imperfect forms of character the master sentiment may be the love of wealth, of power, or of glory (i.e., what we call an ambition, an imperfect lower form of the sentiment of self-regard)." Wealth, power, and glory constitute the master sentiment which succeeds for a long time in unifying Brown's character. Of him O'Neill writes (Clark, Eugene O'Neill, p. 161):

Brown is the visionless demigod of our new materialistic myth—a Success—building his life of exterior things, inwardly empty and resourceless, an uncreative creature of superficial preordained social grooves, a by-product forced aside into slack waters by the deep main current of life-desire.

But the character of Brown is doomed to the same tragic fate as that of Dick, for it, too, suffers disintegration and final defeat. It is Dick who holds up the mirror to the man wherein he sees that the good friend, the good man that he believes himself to be, is but a pose assumed to hide and wipe out the wholly contradictory impulses that live in his unconscious. And still more clearly appears the reflection as Dick continues:

... to be neither creature nor creator! To exist only in her indifference! To be unloved by life! To be merely a successful freak, the result of some snide neutralizing of life forces—a spineless cactus—a wild boar of the mountains altered into a packer's hog eating to become food—a Don Juan inspired to romance by a monkey's glands—and to have life not even think you funny enough to see! ... Consider Mr. Brown. His parents bore him on earth as if they were thereby entering him in a baby parade with prizes for the fittest—and he's still being wheeled along in the procession too fat now to learn to walk, let alone to dance or run, and he'll never live till his liberated dust quickens into earth!

(II, 5, p. 347.)

It is only now when he sees the germ of doubt that "wiggles like

a question mark of insecurity in his blood" that the real self comes into existence and destroys the manikin. Brown must wear now not only the mask that he inherited from the dying Dion, but also one that represents the former successful business man. The master sentiment that gave direction to his life is destroyed; other goals arise and become confused and frustrated; and consequently the disintegrated personality ends in tragedy. O'Neill himself gives a careful psychological analysis of the fate of this character (Clark, Eugene O'Neill, p. 161):

Brown has always envied the creative life force in Dion—that he himself lacks. When he steals Dion's mask of Mephistopheles he thinks he is gaining the power to live creatively, while in reality he is only stealing that creative power made self-destructive by complete frustration. This devil of mocking doubt makes short work of him. It enters him, rending him apart, torturing and transfiguring him until he is even forced to wear a mask of his Success, William A. Brown, before the world, as well as Dion's mask toward wife and children. Thus Billy Brown becomes not himself to anyone. And thus he partakes of Dion's anguish more poignantly, for Dion has the Mother, Cybele—and in the end out of this anguish his soul is born, a tortured Christian soul such as the dying Dion's, begging for belief, and at last finding it on the lips of Cybel.

As he lies dying he tries to make this explanation to Cybel of the tangled threads that represent his broken, frustrated life:

BROWN. It was dark and I couldn't see where I was going and they all picked on me.

CYBEL. I know. You're tired.

BROWN. And when I wake up ... ?

CYBEL. The sun will be shining again.

BROWN. To judge the living and the dead! I don't want justice. I want love.

CYBEL. There is only love.

BROWN. Thank you, Mother. I'm getting sleepy. What's the prayer you taught me—Our Father—?

CYBEL. (with calm exultance) Our Father Who Art!  
(IV, 2, p. 374.)

\* \* \* \*

In both the characters of Dion and Brown, O'Neill gave a dramatic picture of two studies in disintegration. To more clearly represent the multiple personalities in these men, he had them appear in masks. The mask worn by Cybel, the prostitute, does not symbolize dual personality nor does her character in any way undergo disintegration. Cybel has her mask thrust upon her by Society. The mask conforms to the conventional idea; it is loud and coarse, and in so being it sets her apart and permits Society to feel superior. Behind the mask Cybel lives her own life, serenely and at peace with herself because she sees the truth. O'Neill has made her symbolic of Cybele, the Earth Mother. As such she comforts both Dion and Brown. To Dion she says:

You may be important but your life's not.  
There's millions of it born every second.  
Life can cost too much for even a sucker to  
afford it—like everything else. And it's not  
sacred—only the you inside is. The rest is  
earth.

(II, 1, p. 337.)

\* \* \* \*

In the case of Margaret, who represents the modern descendant of the Marguerite of Faust, the mask plays an even less interesting rôle than in the case of Cybel. It represents a protection and is worn only when she must shield her real self from the inquisitive eyes of the world that could otherwise read all too readily the suffering in her face. Margaret's suffering is of her own doing. Had she been willing to accept the real Dion, she might have found happiness. But she forced him to wear the mask; to be the personality that she first believed him to be. In Dion she wanted to see nothing but her own conception of him. Whenever the lonely, starved man that was her husband

approached her without his mask, with agony in his eyes and features distorted from suffering, she would cry out in fright and run from him. The love Margaret gave him was that of a girl-woman—a love that revealed itself as too childish to comprehend his need, or a love that identified itself with mother love. To Dion's agonized cry, "Margaret! Margaret! I'm lonely! I'm frightened! I'm going away! I've got to say good-by!" she can only answer, "Poor boy! Poor Dion! Come home and sleep." Desperately Dion cries: "No! I'm a man! I'm a lonely man!" But Margaret can not understand.

\* \* \* \*

The Great God Brown is one of the most subtly beautiful plays O'Neill has written. It is mystery, and this mystery is expressed in shades of half-realized meanings. All this lies outside the field of psychology. It is also a play of masks—masks representing changes and conflicts in character. Herein lies the only psychological interest that the play presents.

It is indeed possible that O'Neill was influenced considerably by Jung's conception of personality at the time that he was evolving his theory of masks. Jung teaches that in each of us at birth there are many potentialities that may be developed; but not all can be developed; the cultivation of some means the neglect of others. Those that are exercised and developed become the main constituents of the self-conscious personality which is presented to the world, potentialities selected for development which together constitute the mask that is presented to one's fellows; this mask is recognized by them as the person who bears the name and this or that aspect of the personality that Jung calls the persona or mask, for the persona was originally the mask which the actor wore, a mask which indicated the character in

which he appeared. The tendencies that remain undeveloped and hidden from the world constitute a sort of secondary personality. These tendencies are in the main the opposites of those constituting the persona and are incompatible with them. Jung says, furthermore, that the persona is distinctly masculine, but that the secondary personality is preponderately feminine (Analytical Psychology, p. 457 ff.). How well the persona called Dion and the secondary personality called Anthony parallel Jung's outline of personality becomes surprisingly obvious upon reflection.

## XVIII

### LAZARUS LAUGHED

If it can be said of The Great God Brown that its philosophy holds a greater interest than its psychology, that its idea is of greater importance than its characters, the statement can be made with far greater certainty in regard to Lazarus Laughed. What O'Neill began in The Great God Brown, he continued and perfected in Lazarus Laughed.

The symbolism of the earlier play projected through the use of masks is carried to a high point of development in the second play. Shortly after the manuscript was finished in 1926, O'Neill said to Barrett H. Clark (Clark, Engene O'Neill, p. 161) that it was the "most successful thing I ever did. I think I've got it just right. It is, from my viewpoint. It's in seven scenes and all the characters wear masks. And here I've used them right. In Brown I couldn't know beforehand how the scheme would work out. They were too realistic there, and sitting way back in the theatre you couldn't be sure if the actors had on masks or not. I should have had them twice as large—and conventionalized them, so the audience could get the idea at once." In Lazarus Laughed the masks are anything but realistic. Poppa wears a half-mask of olive color "with the red of blood smoldering through, with great, dark, cruel eyes—a dissipated mask of intense evil beauty, of lust and perverted passion," and Tiberius wears one that is a "pallid purple blotched with darker color, as if the imperial blood in his veins had been sickened by age and debauchery." The full-masks worn by the crowd bear a heavy load, for each mask represents both age and



characteristic. The seven periods of man's life are indicated by masks and "Each of these periods is represented by seven different masks of general types of character as follows: The Simple, Ignorant; the Happy, Rager; the Self-tortured, Introspective; the Proud, Self-Reliant; the Servile, Hypocritical; the Revengeful, Cruel; the Sorrowful, Resigned." These intricate group symbols offer an interpretation of life-forces at war in Jews, Romans, and Greeks alike, representative here of the whole Western culture.

Lazarus Laughed is again a continuation of The Great God Brown in that it solves the great contradiction of desiring one thing and living another. In Dion, St. Anthony and Dionysus struggled for opposite goals. The character of the man was disintegrated, and a mask was worn to represent the second character. In Lazarus there exists no contradiction; in him all opposites are united to form a perfect unity, a great integrated personality with one supreme goal as its directing force. Lazarus wears no mask, which indicates that there is no conflict within him. For this reason he stands strangely apart from O'Neill's other characters, many of which are tormented by conflicting emotions to the point where they become pathological.

In the drama under discussion, the particular emotional struggle depicted by the author is the fear of death against the desire to enjoy life. Only Lazarus is free from the all consuming fear that rules man's life. Fear, death, punishment, all this that tortured the soul of St. Anthony does not exist for Lazarus who has become the pure Dionysus, courageous enough to love life for life's sake, to believe that life is an end in itself. Life has become his goal.

Lazarus has risen from the tomb where he experienced a great truth. To the all important question, "What is beyond?" he answers:

There is only life! I heard the heart of Jesus laughing in my heart; "There is Eternal Life in Me," it said, "and there is the same Eternal Life in You! Death is the fear between!" And my heart reborn to love of life cried "Yes!" and I laughed in the laughter of God! (He begins to laugh, softly at first—a laugh so full of complete acceptance of life, a profound assertion of joy in living, so devoid of all self-consciousness or fear, that it is like a great bird song triumphant in depths of sky, proud and powerful, infectious with love, casting on the listener an enthralling spell.)

(I, 1, pp. 387-388.)

The will to be free, to loosen the bonds of life held prisoner by fear of death, was born in the tomb, and now Lazarus comes forth to teach his philosophy of life. Thus he urges his followers:

Out with you! Out into the woods! Upon the hills! Cities are prisons wherein man locks himself from life. Out with you under the sky! Are the stars too pure for your sick passions? Is the warm earth smelling of night too desirous of love for your pale introspective lusts? Out! Let laughter be your new clean lust and sanity! So far man has only learned to snicker meanly at his neighbor! Let a laughing away of self be your new right to live forever! Cry in your pride, "I am Laughter, which is Life, which is the Child of God!"

(II, 1, pp. 418-419.)

And such a philosophy assures "God's laughter on the hills of space, and the happiness of children, and the soft healing of innumerable dawns and evenings, and the blessing of peace!"

To the age old question, What is the meaning of life and death? Lazarus has found the answer. When his followers die with laughter on their lips, he finds assurance for his answer:

Eye to eye with the Fear of Death, did they not laugh with scorn? "Death to old Death," they laughed! "Once as squirming specks we crept from the tides of the sea. Now we return to the sea! Once as quivering flocks of rhythm we beat down from the sun. Now we reenter the sun! Cast aside is out pitiable pretense, our immortal egohood, the holy lantern behind which cringes our Fear of Dark! Flung off is that impudent insult to life's nobility

which gibbers: 'I, this Jew, this Roman, this noble or this slave, must survive in pettiness forever!' Away with such cowardice of spirit! We will to die! We will to change! Laughing we lived with our gift, now with laughter give we back that gift to become again the Essence of the Giver! Dying we laugh with the Infinite. We are the Giver and the Gift! Laughing, we will our own annihilation! Laughing, we give our lives for Life's sake!" This must Man will as his end and his new beginning! He must conceive and desire his own passing as a mood of eternal laughter and cry with pride, "Take back, O God, and accept in turn a gift from me, my grateful blessing for Your gift—and see, O God, now I am laughing with You! I am Your laughter—and You are mine!"

(II, 2, pp. 442-443.)

Lazarus has found a way out of the chaos and despair and disillusionment of a world held in subjection by fear of death. Death can but prick the bubble that was the Petty Tyrant of the Earth—Man;

But as dust, you are eternal change, and everlasting growth, and a high note of laughter soaring through chaos from the deep heart of God! Be proud, O Dust! Then you may love the stars as equals! And then perhaps you may be brave enough to love even your fellowmen without fear of their vengeance!

(II, 1, p. 417.)

Fortified by his faith, Lazarus fears nothing as he tests its validity by opposing those who fear life in fearing death. In the supreme test, when his body is a column of flame, his philosophy of life does not play him false, for to the question, "What is beyond?" his spirit speaks from the conviction of a great truth:

Life! Eternity! Stars and dust! God's Eternal Laughter!

(IV, 2, 477.)

So convincing, so ecstatic is the laughter that comes from Lazarus' lips that even Tiberius laughs great shouts of clear, fearless laughter and with these words crowns the prophet of eternal life with triumph.

I have lived long enough! I will die with Lazarus! I no longer fear death! I laugh!

I laugh at Caesar! I advise you, my brothers,  
 fear not Caesars! Seek Man in the brotherhood  
 of the dust! Caesar is your fear of Man! I  
 counsel you, laugh away your Caesars!

(IV, 2, p. 473.)

\* \* \* \*

Opposed to the splendidly unified personality of Lazarus, is the curiously split character of Caligula. The personality represented in Caligula is the schizoid type. This type is portrayed again and again by O'Neill. In Desire Under the Elms, the "hard-boiled" variety was depicted in Cabot; in All God's Chilluns, the seclusive, suspicious type was found in Ella; in The Great God Brown, the artistic variety saw expression in Dion; in Lazarus Laughed, the symptoms called "paranoid" constitute the cancer in the mental life of Caligula.

The general personality type to which Caligula belongs is the schizoid, or split personality. Under the ruthless, cruel, inhuman nature of the man, there exists another nature in curious discord with the one apparent to his fellowmen. Caligula, as portrayed by O'Neill, is a magnificent example of the schizoid type described by Menninger (The Human Mind, p. 75 ff.). In a frenzy Caligula cries out:

Kill! Kill laughter! Kill those who deny Caesar!  
 I will be Caesar! Kill those who deny Death! I  
 will be Death! My face will be bright with blood!  
 My laughing face, Lazarus! Laughing because men  
 fear me, my face of victorious Fear! Look at me!  
 I am laughing Lazarus! My laughter! Laughter of  
 Gods and Caesars! Ha-ha-ha-ha!

And then of a sudden as he listens to the exultant laughter of Lazarus, he "breaks out into a cry of fear and a sob, and, casting his sword aside, he hides his face in his hands and cries beseechingly,"

Forgive me! I love you, Lazarus!  
 Forgive me!

(II, 2, pp. 427-428.)

The duality of the man's nature is again seen in the following speech:

Pain must twinkle with a mad mirth in a Caesar's eyes--men's pain--or they would become dissatisfied and disrespectful! Ha-ha!

Then suddenly he stops his grating laughter and continues mournfully:

I am sick, Lazarus, sick of cruelty and lust and human flesh and all the imbecilities of pleasure--the unclean antics of half-witted children! (With mournful agony of longing) I would be clean! If I could only laugh your laughter, Lazarus! That would purify my heart. For I could wish to love all men, as you love them--as I love you! ...

In a moment Caligula is to know the great laughter. Lazarus urges him to laugh at the clown Caligula who tries to be the enemy of God; to realize that men are unimportant, that they pass like rain into the sea, but that Man slowly arises from the past of the race of men and this Man knows no death for he is the Son of God's Laughter. And now Caligula bursts into the joyful laughter of a visionary:

I believe! I believe there is love even for Caligula! I can laugh--now--Lazarus! Free laughter! Clean! No sickness! No lust for death! My corpse no longer rots in my heart! The tomb is full of sunlight! I am alive! I who love Man. I who can love and laugh! Listen, Lazarus! I dream! When I am Caesar, I will devote my power to your truth. I will decree that there must be kindness and love! I will make the Empire one great Blessed Tale! Rome shall know happiness, it shall believe in life, it shall learn to laugh your laughter, Lazarus, or I--

LAZARUS. Or you will cut off its head?

CALIGULA. (fiercely) Yes! I will--! (Then meeting Lazarus' eyes, he bents his head with his fists crasily) Forgive me! I forget! I forget!

(IV, 1, p. 467 ff.)

These words are spoken again in the last scene of the drama just before the curtain falls. The final picture that O'Neill emphasizes in this amazing play so full of striking ones is that showing the

pathetically disintegrated, schisoid personality of the Emperor Caligula. Having for the last time the ecstatic laughter of the man he killed, Caligula raises his head and with a tender, childish laughter of love on his lips says,

I laugh Lazarus! I laugh with you! (Then grief stricken) Lazarus! (He hides his face in his hands weeping) No more! (Then beats his head with his fists) I will remember! I will. (Then suddenly with a return to grotesqueness--harshly) All the same I killed him and I proved there is death! (Immediately overcome by remorse, groveling and beating himself) Fool! Madman! Forgive me, Lazarus! Don't forget!

(IV, 2, p. 481.)

Just as clearly as is established the general type of character to which Caligula belongs, is established the particular variety of schisoid personality that he represents. The paranoid type is first of all characterized by its suspicious regard of the world in general (Menninger, The Human Mind, p. 85). It is this characteristic that O'Neill emphasizes in his description of Caligula. He has "large troubled eyes, of a glazed greenish-blue," that "glare out with a shifty feverish suspicion at everyone."

Still another characteristic of one with paranoid tendencies is to regard the whole world in the light of a system of delusions, chiefly delusions of persecution which enhance the importance of the ego (Menninger, p. 86). This self-importance is a striking feature of Caligula's person. O'Neill says of his lips, "Their expression is spoiled, petulant and self-obsessed, weak but domineering. In combination with the rest of the face there is an appalling morbid significance to his mouth. One feels that its boyish cruelty, encouraged as a manly attribute in the coarse brutality of camps, has long ago become naïvely insensitive to any human suffering but its own."

According to Alfred Adler, paranoia attacks people who, having

set a goal for themselves, see themselves in danger of not reaching that goal (Individual Psychology, p. 255). For Caligula there is no goal but that of emperor. He constantly fears that he may fail to reach the throne. A thought comes to him as he talks with Cneius. "What if this Lazarus has really discovered a cure for old age and should reveal it to Tiberius!" His lips tremble, his eyes are terrified, he shrinks against Cneius and pleads, "Oh, Cneius, what could I do then?"

It is interesting to note how well the character of Caligula fits the pattern of one afflicted by paranoia as outlined by Adler in his Individual Psychology (p. 255 ff.). This anticipated defeat in life which characterizes all paranoiacs is already prepared for early in life, says Adler. In comparing himself with his illustrious father, Germanicus, Caligula makes it known that as a child he already realized his inferiority and the difficulty that lay in the way of his ever achieving the fame of his hero father. Pounding his head with his fist he says, tortured,

I am Caligula. I was born in a camp among soldiers.  
My father was Germanicus, a hero, as all men know.  
But I do not understand this—and though I burst  
with pride, I cannot laugh with joy!

(IV, 1, p. 481.)

Adler says further that this ideal of superiority must in its development lead to an attitude of hostility towards the paranoiac's fellowmen who are blamed for his lack of success (p. 256). He lacks faith in himself and mistrusts and disbelieves in others. All this is necessary to enable him to get his balance and his additional ballast. How well the following words attest to Caligula's hostility and fear of men: "I hate men. I am afraid of their poison and their swords and the cringing envy in their eyes that only yields to fear!" And how poignantly is expressed the man's mistrust of himself and how eagerly

does he blame those he hates for his plight when he cries out to  
Lazarus:

If only I did not fear them and despise them!  
If I could only believe--believe in them--in  
life--in myself! --believe that one man or woman  
in the world knew and loved the real Caligula--  
then I might have faith in Caligula myself--then  
I might laugh your laughter!

(IV, 1, p. 468.)

Still another characteristic of the paranoiac according to Adler  
is his self-evaluation intensified to the point of similarity to the  
deity (p. 257). Drunk with imaginary power, with feelings of grandeur,  
Caligula cries:

Kill those who deny Caesar! I will be Caesar!  
Kill those who deny Death! I will be Death!  
My face will be bright with blood! My laughing  
face, Lazarus! Laughing because men fear me!  
My face of victorious Fear! Look at me! I am  
laughing Lazarus! My laughter! Laughter of  
Gods and Caesars!

(II, 2, pp. 427-428.)

And when he has made himself really Caesar by killing Tiberius, realizing  
all too well how uncertain is his seat on the throne and how unfairly he  
finally reached his goal, he calls out, half-crazed:

The gods be with Caesar Caligula! O Immortal Gods,  
give thy brother strength!

Then after rushing out to kill Lazarus, he dashes back waving his bloody  
spear and striking a grandiose pose, crying,

I have killed God! I am Death! Death is Caesar!  
(IV, 2, p. 479.)

A final condition of the paranoiac as stated by Adler is his per-  
secution mania. This represents a compensatory activity (p. 258). The  
fact, as the paranoiac he believes, that all men are abusing or per-  
secuting him, satisfies his desire to be recognized superior and so  
corrects any feeling of self-depreciation. Generally the feeling of  
persecution is the germ of the delusionary system established in the



mind of the paranoiac. In the passages already quoted, Caligula's fear and hatred of the people have been noted. It is hardly necessary to point out that this feeling is based on actual grounds. Caligula might rightfully fear the people when he has forced to despise him through his acts of cruelty. Fear of the people is hardly a delusion nor are these words spoken out of an imaginary situation:

The hairs of a Caesar take sick so mysteriously!  
Even with you [Pneius] who used to ride me on  
your knee, I do not eat nor drink until you have  
tasted first ... I must fear everyone. The world  
is my enemy. (II, 1, p. 409.)

Such actual fear must, indeed, lead to an acute sense of persecution, one which can be supported only with the weapon of death. Caligula's reproach to Lazarus comes from no imaginary sense of loss when he says:

You have murdered my only friend, Lazarus!  
Death would have been my slave when I am  
Caesar. He would have been my jester and made  
me laugh at fear! (He weeps bitterly).  
(II, 1, p. 418.)

But Caligula has become so obsessed by fear that his reason and observation have become distorted. Aware of the guilt within him, his fear is magnified to the point where it becomes a morbid delusion. Fear becomes personified; it tortures and persecutes him to the extent that his mind fabricates imaginary enemies that come to murder him. Mad with triumph over the fact that he has at last become Caesar, he savagely speaks to an audience which he believes he sees before him:

Kneel down! Abase yourselves! I am your Caesar  
and your God! Hail! (... Suddenly the silence  
seems to crush down upon him; he is aware that he  
is alone in the vast arena; he whirls about, looking  
around him as if he felt an assassin at his back; he  
lunges with his spear at imaginary foes, jumping,  
dodging from side to side, yelling) Ho, there! Help!  
Help! Your Caesar calls you! Help, my people! To  
the rescue!

(IV, 2, p. 480.)

Such is the character of Caligula. For him Fear became the master

that made a pitiable parasite of its slave. For Lazarus, Fear was dead, and he was himself the master of his destiny. Caligula, the schisoid, the broken, the disintegrated, is the counterpart of Lazarus, the united, the rounded, and well integrated. In creating the two types, O'Neill again proves himself an unerring psychologist.

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O'Neill, in discussing Lazarus Laughed with Barrett Clark, spoke of the presence and characteristics of crowds as presented by means of the masks. After considering the characteristics which he attributes to the crowds, one must conclude that O'Neill understands group psychology as well as he does individual psychology. Perhaps there is not so great a distinction between the individual and the group as it first appears, because psychology can hardly consider the individual without regarding his relation to others. In the individual's mental life, someone else is invariably involved as a model, as an opponent, or as an object which calls forth many different kinds of emotions. Yet the individual as a member of a group becomes a part of a sort of collective mind which makes him feel, think, and act in a manner quite different from that in which he would feel, think, and act were he in a state of isolation.

Much has been written on group psychology; some of the outstanding contributions are: Psychologie des foules, by Le Bon; Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego, by Freud; Die Psychologie der Kollektivitäten, by von Posner; and The Group Mind, by McDougall. These investigators treat different problems and separate issues growing out of the general study, but they all agree more or less on the characteristics that mark the collective mind of the group. Since O'Neill does not present his crowds in a manner that would permit one to determine the

reasons which he believes to lie behind their actions, it is impossible through analysis of his crowd scenes to indicate whether he follows Freud or someone less certain of a theory. One can only show that O'Neill understands very well the characteristics of the crowd. These characteristics listed by Le Bon and quoted by Freud, though thinkers, statesmen, and writers have perhaps noted them many times before, are excellently portrayed in Lazarus Laughed.

The first characteristic of the group mind as quoted from Le Bon by Freud is its changeability, its impulsiveness, and its irritability. The impulses that a group obeys may according to circumstances be generous or cruel, heroic or cowardly, but they are always so imperious that no personal interest, not even that of self-preservation, can make itself felt. Nothing about it is premeditated (Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego, pp. 14-15). All this is given dramatic expression in scene two of the first act of the play (pp. 398-399).

The messenger has just arrived with the news that the Nazarene has been crucified. The crowd begins to wail and rend its garments, to tear its hair and beat its head upon the ground. Mary, insane with rage, cries out to her followers,

An eye for an eye! Avenge the Master!

The frenzy of grief is now turned to rage as the Nazarenes leap to their feet and draw forth swords and knives that had been concealed before. Again Mary cries wildly,

Vengeance! Death to His murderers!

while an Orthodox priest addresses his followers in the same savage manner,

Death to the Nazarenes!

With cries of rage the two groups rush at each other. There is no thought

of self-preservation as knives and swords flash over the heads of the mass. In a moment the emotion of grief has changed to the emotion of rage, the impulse to weep has given way to the impulse to kill.

The scene just described also illustrates the second characteristic, that the group is open to influence, that it has no critical faculty, and that its feelings are always very simple and very exaggerated so that a group knows neither doubt nor uncertainty (p. 15). Mary's cry of vengeance brought immediate action; there was no doubt, no question, no weighing of her proposal.

A third characteristic is that the crowd goes directly to extremes; if a suspicion is expressed, it is instantly changed into an incontrovertible certainty; a trace of antipathy is turned into furious hatred (p. 16). The truth of this statement is attested to in the final scene of the play.

Lazarus is being consumed by flame. The crowd frantic with hope cries, "Hail Lazarus!" while Tiberius in triumph calls, "You are dying, Lazarus!" But Lazarus, thinking only of the victory of life over pain and death answers, "Yes!" Tiberius believing that this assertion is intended as a taunt and that Lazarus, contrary to the hopes of everyone, is admitting the existence of death, rages in disappointment,

Ha! You admit it, do you, coward! Craven!  
Knave! Duper of fools! Clown! Liar! I  
laugh at you!

The crowd, which has just been supporting Lazarus, with no other cause but the mistrust these words imply, immediately changes its love to ferocious hatred; the man who a moment before has been its idol now becomes the object of its mad hooting:

Yah! Yah! Yellow Gut! Bungkisser! Muckheel!  
Schmewiper! Liar! Pig! Jackal! Die! We  
laugh at you!

Inclined as it itself is to extremes, a group can only be excited by an excessive stimulus, says Le Bon. Anyone who wishes to produce an effect upon it needs no logical adjustment in his arguments; he must paint in the most forcible colors, he must exaggerate and he must repeat (pp. 16-17). The story which Lazarus tells the crowd of his experience in the tomb is indeed a strange, illogical story, and one whose truth might well be questioned, but its vividness serves as the stimulus necessary to make the listeners acclaim,

Laugh! Laugh!  
 Fear is no more!  
 Death is dead!  
 Laugh! Laugh!  
 There is only God!  
 We are His Laughter!

(II, I, pp. 418-419.)

The words of Lazarus that called forth this avowal of faith in his philosophy might well be quoted to illustrate still another characteristic of the group. A group is subject to the truly magical power of words; it can evoke the most formidable tempests in the group mind, and is also capable of stilling them (p. 19). Lazarus raises his hands for silence; then,

Listen! In the dark peace of the grave the man called Lazarus rested. He was still weak as one recovering from a long illness—for, living, he had believed his life a sad one! He lay dreaming to the crown of silence, feeling as the flow of blood in his own veins the past recenter the heart of God to be renewed by faith into the future. He thought: "Men call this death" —for he had been dead only a little while and he remembered. Then, of a sudden a strange gay laughter tumbled from his heart as though his life, so long repressed in him by fear, had found at last its voice and a song for singing. "Men call this death," it sang. "Men call life death and fear it. They hide from it in horror. Their lives are spent in hiding. Their fear becomes their living. They worship life in death!" ... And here the song of Lazarus' life grew pitiful. "Men must learn to live," it mourned. "Before their fear invented death they

knew, but now they have forgotten. They must be taught to laugh again!" And Lazarus answered "Yes!" Thus sang his life to Lazarus while he lay dead! Man must learn to live by laughter!

(II, 1, pp. 417-418.)

When individuals come together in a group, all their individual inhibitions fall away and all the cruel, brutal, and destructive instincts, which lie dormant in individuals as relics of a primitive epoch, are stirred up to find free gratification. But under the influence of suggestion, groups are also capable of high achievements in the shape of abnegation, unselfishness, and devotion to an ideal (p. 17). This abnegation which may at times be a characteristic of the crowd is the motivation for a dramatic episode in scene two of the second act of the drama. Lazarus' followers have been captured and are now to be killed so that Caligula may prove that death is not dead. The signal is about to be given to the legions when Lazarus cries,

Wait! I will awaken my beloved ones that their passing may be a symbol to the world that there is no death!

Through the power of his laughter which acts as the suggestion, Lazarus' followers go out to meet death eagerly. This strange account is given Caligula when he asks, "Have you killed all his followers?"

No. They died. They did not wait for our attack. They charged upon us, laughing! They tore our swords away from us, laughing, and we laughed with them! They stabbed themselves, dancing as though it were a festival! They died laughing in one another's arms! We laughed, too, with joy because it seemed it was not they who died but death itself they killed!

(II, 2, p. 423.)

A final characteristic outlined by Le Bon is the crowd's demand for illusions--illusions without which it can not sustain itself. It constantly gives what is unreal precedence over what is real (p. 20). Lazarus' life is about to expire. In a great pleading cry the crowd

begs him to tell what is beyond. And Lazarus answers,

Life! Eternity! Stars and dust! God's eternal  
Laughter!

As the chorus dances in a strange, wild measure of liberated joy, the  
crowd joins in the refrain,

We are dust!  
We are gods!  
Laugh! Laugh!

(IV, 2, pp. 477-478.)

It is not impossible to believe that what to Lazarus is a great  
truth is yet but an illusion to the ignorant crowd, a crowd that has  
not learned the meaning of life and therefore can not comprehend the  
philosophy that takes life for its subject. To the crowd the words of  
the dying Lazarus are but a beautiful illusion.

## XIX

### STRANGE INTERLUDE

O'Neill in Strange Interlude makes a conscious effort to pull apart and dissect every attitude, every action, and every spoken thought in order to discover the truth beneath it. Through the use of the "aside," he seeks to express the innermost thoughts and emotions of his characters, so often at variance with their spoken words. This technique permits the revelation of intuitive things rich in psychological significance. Here one finds a mixture of conscious self-examination and unconscious self-revelation. Through his use of our recent knowledge of the unconscious, the dramatist has written a drama which comes close to the complete truth of life.

The stories of the emotional lives of the characters as they appear in the play are as absorbing in their complexities and in their erotic and pathological nature as are the case studies that come to the attention of the psychiatrist in his clinic. In the play a group of characters struggle for a successful orientation of their lives in a world of social and moral chaos which has made them uncertain of their direction. It will be better to study them one by one, for each presents a distinct problem of psychological interest.

\* \* \* \*

Strange Interlude is a tale of the emotional life of a frustrated woman. Here she appears in all her primitive aspects—possessive, defiant, reckless, creative, passionate. To complete itself, her life must include father, lover, husband, son. Though she appears a devil,



tampering with the lives of five men whom she attracts through her peculiar psychological make up, she yet appears a tragic human being in her struggle to secure some kind of emotional wholeness—a thing quite impossible since her real lover is dead and only her ideal remains.

At the beginning of the play, Nina, the daughter of a cultured college professor, is presented as a neurotic and morbid individual. She has been deprived of her lover and of the children she longed to have by him. Yet her emotions remain hopelessly fixed upon this man who died in the war. She despises herself because through moral scruples taught by her father she never completed that love. It may be said, then, that she is fixated upon some very definite part of her past—the death of her lover which occurred before she granted him complete satisfaction. She suffers estrangement from the present and from the future, especially from her father whom she holds responsible for her present sense of frustration. ✓ Since she has denied her lover, she reaches the strange conclusion that she must give herself to the maimed soldiers in the veterans' hospital where, in order to escape from the hated house of her father, she is to begin her career as a nurse.

It is impossible not to wonder how, in what manner, and driven by what motives, an individual may acquire such a remarkable and unprofitable attitude toward life. Freud says that "the traumatic experience is one which, in a short space of time, is able to increase the strength of a given stimulus so enormously that its assimilation or rather its elaboration can no longer be effected by normal means; [that] this analogy tempts us to classify as traumatic those experiences as well upon which our neurotics appear to be fixated. [The] determining factor of the neuroses . . . would then be comparable to a traumatic disease and would arise from the inability to meet an over-

powering emotional experience" (General Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 328).

Gordon's death caused a traumatic fixation, for it was an overpowering emotional experience for Nina. Throughout life she never wholly recovered from the loss of her lover. But what is the relationship between her sense of guilt at remaining "Gordon's silly virgin" and her shocking proposal to now give what was denied Gordon to the men in the veterans' hospital? To her father she gives this reason:

But do you understand now that I must somehow  
find a way to give myself to Gordon still, that  
I must pay my debt and learn to forgive myself?  
(I, p. 39.)

Such reasoning seems utterly incongruous. Why would a woman who had denied her lover on their last night together, when she knew instinctively that he would be killed, suddenly react in this amazing manner? Such carnality defies comprehension. Surely O'Neill, unerring student of human nature, incomprehensible as it may be at times, would not depart so far from human verities as to make the reason Nina gives the actual motivating impulse for her activity in the hospital.

It is more plausible to describe Nina's conduct as a compulsory act growing out of her traumatic disease. Now, compulsory activity, according to Freud (General Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 239), is carried on without the patient's knowing why he so engages himself. Nina gives a reason but this can hardly be a true reason. Psychological processes have been going on within her for which the compulsory act finds an expression. Freud insists (p. 240) that neurotic symptoms lead unmistakably to a conviction of the existence of an unconscious psychology. The meaning of the symptom is unknown to the sufferer; it develops as a substitute for something else that has remained suppressed. Certain

of these psychological experiences should normally become so far elaborated that consciousness will attain knowledge of them. This may not take place, however, but out of these interrupted and disturbed processes, imprisoned in the unconscious, the symptom arises (p. 242).

In Nina's case, what is it that has been suppressed? The desire to give her sexuality free reign. Within her there went on a bitter conflict between the libidinous impulse (to use a Freudian term) and sexual suppression, between the sensual and ascetic tendencies. During the last night with Gordon the ascetic tendency had the upper hand, with a result that brought her misery. Now, unconsciously, she would put an end to the conflict within her by giving the victory to her libidinous impulse. To make her activity at the hospital compatible to her, she rationalizes in such a way that she appears to be making a sacrifice of herself. Freud says (p. 373) that a conflict between the libido and the desire to suppress its demands is not abolished by giving one of these tendencies the victory over its opponent. In either case, that which has been suppressed gives rise to symptoms. Neither of the two decisions can end the inner conflict—one always remains unsatisfied.

So Nina returns after her father's death more of a pathological case than before she left. Her experience in the hospital has hardly been successful, for the gratification of her erotic desires leads only to a deep sense of guilt. The mental anguish that she endures is expressed in the cynical, jeering remarks made to Charlie:

I tried to pray to the modern science God. I thought of a million light years to a spiral nebula—on other universes among innumerable others. But how could God care about our trifling misery of death—born-of-birth? I couldn't believe in Him, and I wouldn't if I could! I'd rather imitate His indifference and prove I had that one trait at least in common!

Charlie is worried but Nina goes on, bitterly,

... I wanted to believe in any God at any price—a heap of stones, a mud image, a drawing on a wall, a bird, a fish, a snake, a baboon—or even a good man preaching the simple platitudes of truth, those Gospel words we love the sound of but whose meaning we pass on to specks to live by!

And again the agony in her soul speaks out:

The mistake began when God was created in a male image. Of course, women would see Him that way, but men should have been gentlemen enough, remembering their mothers, to make God a woman! But the God of Gods—the Boss—has always been a man. That makes life so perverted, and death so unnatural. We should have imagined life as created in the birth-pain of God the Mother. Then we would understand why we, Her children, have inherited pain, for we would know that our life's rhythm beats from Her great heart, torn with the agony of love and birth. And we would feel that death meant reunion with Her, a passing back into Her substance, blood of Her blood again, peace of Her peace! ...

(II, p. 75 ff.)

By way of parenthesis it is interesting to note that in these speeches about God the Father and God the Mother, one finds in embryo the idea that is so fully developed in the next of O'Neill's plays, Lynese. It should be further noted that the idea of the return to the womb, insisted upon by Otto Rank as a universal longing of mankind, is also suggested here and clarified in the later drama. A third observation concerns Nina's resentment over the fact that God is imagined a man. Here O'Neill again seems to hold with the psychoanalysts, particularly Freud, in the belief that woman is envious of the superiority of men (Introductory Lectures, p. 170).

In the confession that follows, Nina shows that the unconscious has been made conscious. There has been an inner change in the woman. She has been begging Charlie to punish her, and when he asks why she desires this, she says,

For playing the silly slut, Charlie. For giving my cool clean body to men with hot hands and greedy

eyes which they call love! Ugh!

CHARLIE. Why did you do this, Nina?

NINA. God knows, Charlie! Perhaps I knew at the time but I've forgotten. It's all mixed up ... I seemed to feel Gordon standing against a wall with eyes bandaged and these men were a firing squad whose eyes were also bandaged—and only I could see! No, I was the blindest! I would not see! I knew it was stupid, morbid business, that I was more maimed than they were, really, that the war had blown my heart and insides out! ... Yet I kept on, from one to one, like a stupid driven animal until one night not long ago I had a dream of Gordon driving down out of the sky in flames and he looked at me with such sad burning eyes ... Then I saw what a fool I'd been—a guilty fool! So be kind and punish me!

(II, pp. 81-82.)

Freud asserts that the symptoms disappear when the unconscious connections have been made conscious (p. 242). The neurosis is now over since the conflict no longer exists—its end occurring as soon as the patient becomes aware of what is being suppressed. Nina is now ready to lead a normal life. When Charlie suggests that she marry Sam Evans, she agrees, saying,

I want children. I must become a mother so I can give myself. I am sick of sickness.

(II, p. 83.)

When Nina next appears, she is calm, contented, quite happy, with none of the nervous strangeness that marked her before. She has become Sam's wife, and within her she feels stirring the child that she so greatly desires. At the moment when life seems a normal process through which one might pass peacefully, Nina's newly found happiness is shattered by Mrs. Evans' appalling revelation. Nina is told that she must destroy her child, for there is insanity in Sam's blood; that she must be satisfied with Sam alone. In her agony she blames Sam, Sam who knew nothing of this insanity, and declares she will leave him.

I don't love him! I only married him because he

needed me—and I needed children! And now you tell me I've got to kill my—oh, yes, I see I've got to, you needn't argue any more! I love it too much to make it run that chance! ... And still you can dare to tell me I can't even leave Sam!

(III, p. 111)

The mother pleads with her to stay with Sam so that he will not become insane, and Nina, realizing that she used him to save herself, thinks:

Lived fair ... pride ... trust ... play the game!  
... who is speaking to me ... Gordon! ... oh,  
Gordon, do you mean I must give Sam the life I  
didn't give you? ... Sam loved you too ... he  
said, if we have a boy, we'll call him Gordon in  
Gordon's honor ... Gordon's honor! ... what must  
I do now in your honor, Gordon? ... yes! ... I  
know! ...

Then speaking in a dull voice,

All right, Mother. I'll stay with Sam. There's  
nothing else I can do, is there, when it's not  
his fault, poor boy! But I'll be so lonely!  
I'll have lost my baby! O, Mother, how can I  
keep on living?

(III, p. 112.)

Throughout this entire act and also the next, emphasis is laid again and again on Nina's crying need for a child. It is the one thing in life that she desires, for she believes this will bring her supreme happiness. Since O'Neill insists so strongly on the all important part a child plays in the life of a woman, he seems to be in accord with the Freudian belief that a woman's happiness is first completed when her life-long desire for a child, especially for a son, is one day fulfilled (Introductory Lectures, p. 175).

Sam's mother expresses this same exaltation. She says,

I remember when I was carrying ~~Sam~~<sup>Sammy</sup> sometimes I'd  
forget I was a wife, I'd only remember the child  
in me.

Thinking of a daring way in which Nina might still have her baby,

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the mother continues:

And then I used to wish I'd gone out deliberately in our first year, without my husband knowing, and picked a man, a healthy male to breed by, same's we do with stock, to give the man I loved a healthy child. And if I didn't love that other man nor him me where would be the harm? Then God would whisper: "It'd be a sin, adultery, the worst sin!" ... But I was too afraid of God then to have ever done it!

(III, p. 114.)

When Nina declares that she does not believe in God the Father, Mrs. Evans says it would be easy for her then. "You've got to have a healthy baby—sometime—so's you can both be happy! It's your rightful duty!" And Nina, again overwhelmed with the longing for her child, says:

I want to be happy! ... it's my right ... and my duty! ... Oh, my baby ... my poor baby ... I'm forgetting you ... desiring another after you are dead! ... I feel you beating against my heart for sorry ... oh!

(III, p. 115.)

But the abortion takes place, and Nina, seeing in Sam no longer the father of her child, finds life with him almost unendurable. The following dialogue between the "Id" and the "Ego" is carried on in the true Freudian manner. From the "Id," or the great unconscious that knows no values, no good and evil, no morality, where the pleasure-principle dominates (Introductory Lectures, p. 105), there comes the expression of a desire that has escaped the censorship of the "Ego":

How weak he is! ... he'll never do anything ... never give me my desire! ... if he'd only fall in love with someone else ... go away ... not be here in my father's room ... I even have to give him a home ... if he'd disappear ... leave me free ... if he'd die.

But the "Ego" which interpolates between desire and action and makes use of the residues of experience stored up in memory, which dethrones the pleasure-principle and substitutes for it the reality-principle which promises greater security and greater success (Introductory

Lectures, p. 106), awakens to check the "Id" in its mad desire;

I must stop such thoughts ... I don't mean it ...  
poor Sam! ... trying so hard ... loving me so much  
...

And then with resignation and a masochistic tendency,

There, Sammy's Mother and Gordon ... I'll play  
the game ... it will make him happy for a while  
... as he was in those weeks after we'd left his  
mother ... when I gave myself with a mad pleasure  
in torturing myself for his pleasure.

(IV, p. 125 ff.)

The need for a child in order to save her own happiness and Sam's  
never allows her to forget Mrs. Evans' suggestion. Graily Nina thinks,

"... it's your rightful duty" ... that seemed  
right then ... but now ... it seems cowardly ...  
to betray poor Sam ... and vile to give myself ...  
without love or desire ... and yet I've given myself  
to men before without thought ... can't I do that  
again? ... when it's a case of Sam's happiness? ...  
and my own? ...

(IV, p. 127.)

Throughout the remaining part of the act, while she tells Ned  
Darrell of her plan, and when she finally proposes that he be the  
father of her child, the only motive or drive for Nina's action seems  
to be her desire to have a child. With strange intensity, speaking of  
the lost baby, she says:

Oh, Ned, I've loved it more than I've ever loved  
anything in my life — even Gordon! I loved it  
so it seemed at times that Gordon must be its real  
father, that Gordon must have come to me in a dream  
while I was lying asleep beside Sam! And I was  
happy! I almost loved Sam then! I felt he was a  
good husband!

(IV, p. 146.)

And finally as the curtain falls,

I am Nina, who wants her baby. I should be so  
grateful, Ned. I should be so humbly grateful.

(IV, p. 156.)

Remembering the Nina of the hospital and granting the strength of  
the drive—the desire to have a child, which, according to Freud, as



has just been seen, is overwhelming, one is prepared for Nina's daring action. And remembering also the passionate nature of the frustrated woman who lost her lover and who could not love the man she married, one is not surprised to hear at the beginning of the fifth act that Nina began to love the man whom she had chosen to be the father of her child. Now there is a triumphant strength about her, a new self-confidence, that has completely wiped out any impression of neurotic strain. Something of the completeness of her happiness now that she feels a child within her is expressed in the following thoughts:

There ... again ... his child! ... my child moving  
in my life ... my life moving in my child ... the  
world is whole and perfect ... all things are each  
other's ... life is and the is is beyond reason  
... questions die in the silence of this peace ...  
I am living a dream within the great dream of the  
tide ... breathing in the tide I dream and breathe  
back my dream into the tide ... suspended in the  
movement of the tide, I feel life move in me,  
suspended in me ... no why's matter ... there is no  
why ... I am a mother ... God is a Mother ...  
(V, p. 161.)

There is an echo of this serenity, this oneness with God, at the close of the act when Nina finds herself deserted by her lover. The knowledge of her motherhood is her sole sustaining thought. This sense of motherhood so pervades Nina's being that she instinctively adopts a motherly attitude toward her husband whom she, through this interlude of passion, wholly ignored and despised. Ned, before leaving, told Sam that he was to be a father. Sam's intense happiness over the reality of a long cherished wish makes it impossible for Nina to tell him the truth even now when she thinks only of her own happiness with her lover and no longer of trying to save Sam. She thinks in anguish:

I can't say that to him! ... I can't tell him  
without Ned to help me! ... I can't ... look at  
his face! ... oh, poor Sammy! poor little boy!  
... poor little boy! ...

Then aloud,

I mean, you weren't to know about it, Sammy.

EVANS. Why? Don't you want me to be happy, Nina?

NINA. Yes--yes, I do, Sammy. [Thinking strongly]  
Little boy! ... little boy! ... one gives  
birth to little boys! ... one doesn't drive them  
mad and kill them! ...

EVANS. [Thinking] She's never called me Sammy before  
... ~~someone~~ used to ... oh, yes, Mother ...  
(V, p. 180.)

This new attitude of Nina towards her husband is in accordance with Freud who says (New Introductory Lectures, p. 183) that a marriage is not firmly assured until the woman has succeeded in making her husband into her child and in acting the part of a mother toward him.

Although Nina's marriage with Sam is not a successful one in so far that she shares his love for her, her new rôle of motherhood at least safeguards this marriage from the rupture that was about to befall it. When Ned returns in act six, now the weaker of the two, intent on telling Sam the truth, demanding that Nina run away with him, she says to him:

I've changed, Ned. You've got to realize that.  
I'm not your old mad Nina. I still love you. I  
will always love you. But now I love my baby too.  
His happiness comes first with me!

And a little later,

... I don't feel guilty or wicked. I have made Sam  
happy! And I'm proud! I love Sam's happiness! I  
love the devoted husband and father in him! And I  
feel it's his baby--that we've made it his baby!  
(III, pp. 227-228.)

At the close of the act O'Neill pictures Nina happier than she has appeared before and happier than she will ever be again. She is nearer the wholeness that she seems to be striving for, nearer the composite of all womanhood, for about her are the four men who are

necessary to her in the development of her sex life. There is Charlie whom she identifies with her father, for he belongs to the period of her childhood joys and will again play a part in her life when all the passion will have burned out; at present any thought of his loving her is "a sickening idea . . . seems incestuous somehow." There is her husband, Sam, devoted, dependable. There is her lover, Ned, whose passion must feed her passion. There is her baby, little Gordon, who more than anyone else establishes her place in life. These men represent the phases of the sexual life of woman as outlined by Freud in his lecture on "The Psychology of Women" (Introductory Lectures, p. 155 ff.). To herself Nina murmurs:

My three men! ... I feel their desires converging in me! ... to form one complete beautiful male desire which I absorb ... and as whole ... they dissolve in me, their life is my life ... I am pregnant with the three! ... husband! ... lover! ... father! ... and the fourth man! ... little man! ... little Gordon! ... he is mine too! ... that makes it perfect! ... Why I should be the proudest woman on earth! ... I should be the happiest woman in the world! ...

Then she laughs hysterically,

... only I'd better knock on wood ... before God  
the Father hears my happiness! ...

(VI, pp. 234-235.)

But God the Father must have heard ere long, for the Nina of eleven years later is resigned of the Nina in the first act of the drama. The eyes are tragic, the expression masklike, a sense of great mental strain pervading her whole personality. Sick of the fight for happiness, she wants "to rot away in peace." The passion for Ned is rapidly burning out; only the love for the Gordon of her dreams remains unaltered. In her son she sees the image of her ideal lover, and it is her love for little Gordon that brings the only real happiness left in life. Bitterly musing on Ned, she thinks:

My lover! ... so very rarely now, those inter-  
ludes of passion ... what has bound us together  
all these years? ... love? ...

(VII, p. 241.)

Yet this passion will not burn out without a struggle. In spite of bitter scenes that end either in Ned's running away or in Nina's sending him off, these two grow lonely in the life they live; they desire each other, they kiss and cry and love again. But Ned always stays too long; he never leaves before the ugly bitter stage of blame and reproach is reached.

Very slowly, very subtly, and certainly all unconsciously, Charlie begins to supersede Ned. In approaching the final stage of her sexual life which often resembles the earliest one, Nina, the woman, thinks less of passion and more of comfort and contentment. Eleven years earlier when Charlie was identified with her father, Nina thought of any physical relationship with him as incestuous. Now, thinking of such a relation, she wonders:

... the idea used to be revolting ... now, nothing  
about love seems important enough to be revolting  
... poor Charlie, he only thinks he ought to desire  
me! ... dear Charlie, what a perfect lover he would  
make for one's old age! ... what a perfect lover  
when one was past passion!

Then with a sudden scornful revulsion,

These men make me sick! ... I hate all three of them!  
... they disgust me! ... the wife and mistress in me  
has been killed by them! ... thank God, I am only a  
mother now! ... Gordon is my little man, my only  
man! ...

(VII, p. 250.)

But herein lies not her happiness, as she believes, but the kernel of what later grows into her greatest misery. Freud believes that "the only thing that brings a mother undiluted satisfaction is her relation to a son; that it is quite the most complete relationship between human beings, and the one that is the most free from ambivalence"

(Introductory Lectures, p. 185). This happy relationship between Nina and her son undoubtedly existed during the first few years of Gordon's life, for again and again Nina has spoken of her joy in her son.

The first love object of the boy is his mother and she may ultimately remain so throughout his whole life. However, situations of dangerous rivalry may arise even in the nursery which become the basis of a lasting estrangement. The boy may take someone else for the object of his love to replace his faithless mother (General Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 289). This is what has happened in Gordon's case. Early he became jealous of Nina's love for Ned, whom he looks upon as a rival for his mother's affections, and believing her faithless to him he transfers his affection to Sam whom, of course, he believes to be his father. O'Neill makes all this perfectly clear when Ned, speaking of Gordon, says to Nina:

He feels cheated of your love—by me. So he's concentrating his affections on Sam whose love he knows is secure, and withdrawing from you.  
(VII, p. 251.)

A little later Nina realizes that what Ned said was all too true. But when she began using every motive imaginable to win back the love of her son, it was already too late.

This losing struggle to reinstate herself as the sole object of her son's love makes Nina resemble the embittered, neurotic woman of act four. The inroads of time have been too grievous to be concealed by make-up, no matter how cleverly applied. Her passion for Ned has long ago become gray ashes. Sadly she thinks:

My old lover ... how well and young he looks ...  
now we no longer love each other at all ... our  
account with God the Father is settled ... after-  
noons of happiness paid for with years of pain ...  
love, passion, ecstasy ... in what a far-off life  
were they alive! ... the only living life is in  
the past and future ... the present is an interlude

... strange interlude in which we call on past and future to bear witness we are living ...

(VIII, p. 288.)

Sadness is the only emotion expressed for dead passion; bitterness and anguish are reserved for the loss of her son's love.

I've lost my son, Ned! Sam has made him all his. And it was done so gradually that, although I realized what was happening, there was never any way I could interfere.

(VIII, p. 292.)

Ned with jealousy because Gordon is to marry Madeline, she is willing to make her the same sort of slave to his convenience as Ned was to her. But marriage she will not countenance, for with it she will lose her ownership and Gordon will forget her. She appeals to Ned to help her but he refuses to again meddle with human lives, besides, he says,

I'm quite sure Gordon isn't my son, if the real deep core of the truth were known! I was only a body to you. Your first Gordon used to come back to life. I was never more to you than a substitute for your dead lover! Gordon is really Gordon's son!

And Nina, who has remained true to nothing in life except her love, now idealized, for the first Gordon, reflects:

... is Gordon Gordon's? ... oh, I hope so! ... oh, dear, dear Gordon, help me to get back your son! ... I must find some way ...

(VIII, p. 308.)

"The way" she finally chooses is as despicable as the jealousy within her own soul—a jealousy that can best be explained psychologically by saying that Nina identifies her own son with her former lover. Then it was death that brought frustration; now it is Madeline that is about to subject her to the same agony. In desperation she begins to tell Madeline that she can never marry Gordon because of insanity in his blood. But Ned is there to prevent the lie.

Seeing that she is powerless by her own efforts to save Gordon for herself, she cries in wild passion:

I hear the Father laughing! ... O Mother God, protect my son! ... let Gordon fly to you in heaven! ... quick, Gordon! ... love is the Father's lightning! ... Madeline will bring you down in flames! ... I hear his screaming laughter! ... fly back to me! ...

(VIII, p. 319.)

It is only at the close of the act, by playing the rôle of the martyr again, that Nina is brought to her senses. To bring Sam happiness, who has just suffered a fatal stroke, she promises to give him Gordon so that he may give him to Madeline. Strange words for Sam, could he have caught their meaning!

In the ninth and final act of the drama which takes place a few months later, Nina appears much older. Resignation has come into her face. There is no longer an attempt to be sexually attractive. Sam has just been buried. She is sad, as she might be at the death of a friend. She reflects that she has helped him to live, that she made him believe that she loved him, that he smiled, just before he died, gratefully and forgivingly. Now she will go back to her father's house and

Charlie will come in every day to visit ... he'll comfort and amuse me ... we can talk together of the old days ... when I was a girl ... when I was happy ... before I fell in love with Gordon Shaw and all this tangled mess of love and hate and pain and birth began! ...

(IX, p. 336.)

With this desire to return to that happy phase of her life, freed from all the agony that life brought with it, Nina undergoes a curious, fleeting, traumatic situation. She has just watched her son fly away with Madeline; and with tortured exultancy cried out her wish for his happiness. This brings to her mind the tragedy of her life, which,

earlier in this analysis, has been described as a traumatic disaster. There is a complete transposition into this situation. She sees in Charlie her father, she hurries over to him and huddles against him:

Gordon is dead, Father. I've just had a cable.

And then, realizing what she has said,

What I mean is, he flew away to another life—  
my son, Gordon, Charlie. So we're alone again—  
just as we used to be.

(IX, p. 350.)

Her final emotional experience, that of a mother, has also been a failure, for it brought her little happiness. For Nina her life was but "a strange dark interlude in the electrical display of God the Father." In the end she seeks only peace and contentment with Charlie, who insists that the distressing episode of life thus far has been only "an interlude of trial and preparation in which their souls have been scraped clean of impure flesh and made worthy to bleach in peace."

\* \* \*

In the character of Marsden, is best demonstrated O'Neill's new device—that of having the characters express their inmost thoughts. What actually goes on in the soul of Marsden can not be expressed in the outward exterior of his life by even the most skillful acting. The blurred desires, the insights, the evasions, and the subtleties that make up the man's nature can hardly be revealed without the Freudian method of confession; from the depths of the unconscious come startling truths that give the lie to the apparent exterior. Who, for example, but the most careful analyst would believe that sex was so paramount in the tall, middle-aged man with the dreamy eyes and the ironic lips, the quiet charm and the appealing friendliness? Consciously his greatest desire is to rene sex out of his life, but the cry, "To the



devil with sex,\* is followed a moment later by the sardonic thought,

... our impotent pose of today to beat the loud  
drum on fornication! ... boosters ... eunuchs  
parading with the phallus! ... giving themselves  
away ... whom do they fool? ... not even them-  
selves! ...

(I, p. 14.)

In this passage O'Neill not only strikes the key for the entire drama, but he also shows that he holds the Freudian view of sex, namely, that it is focal, vital, and indispensable. The directing power of sex in the life of Nina has already been noted; in the life of Marsden it plays no less important a rôle.

Marsden, to begin with, is an excellent example of the introvert type as it is analysed by Carl Jung (Analytical Psychology, pp. 402-403). Analyst that he himself is, Marsden has indeed developed his thought rather than his feeling. These thoughts, whether expressed to a second person or in silent conversation with himself, are highly individualized. Of his own novels he says:

All the twenty odd books I've written have been long-winded fairy tales for grown-ups—about dear old ladies and witty, cynical bachelors and quaint characters with dialects, and married folk who always admired and respected each other, and lovers who avoided love in hushed whispers! That's what I've been, Nina—a hush-hush whisperer of lies! Now I'm going to give an honest healthy yell—turn the sun into the shadows of lies—shout "This is life and this is sex, and here are passion and hatred and regret and joy and pain and ecstasy, and these are men and women, sons and daughters whose hearts are weak and strong, whose blood is blood and not a soothing syrup!"

(VIII, p. 309.)

More significant of his individual thinking is the following idea:

There are many things still to be done this evening ... life's terms of peace, after the long interlude of war with life, have still to be concluded ... Youth must keep decently away ... so many old wounds may have to be unbound, and old scars pointed to with pride, to prove to ourselves we have been brave

and noble! ...

(IX, p. 331.)

Marsden, not being an extreme case of introversion, does not limit himself to thinking and observing. He also feels, very passionately and deeply, but his emotions are turned inward. Outwardly he is considered cold and dry. Nina never dreams of the passionate love for her that burns beneath the conventional friendliness, and Dr. Darrell confesses—"I thought he was so ingrown he didn't care a damn about anyone!" Jung says that in a well-adapted individual the introvert will at times be found to have his feelings directed outwards so that the result is curiously deceptive. And so in Marsden's case one finds him showing feelings—the death of Professor Leeds brings tears to his eyes, and he appears amiable, sympathetic, and even emotional in many instances. However, a critical examination of his outward feelings shows them to be more or less conventional; his feelings, in other words, are not individualized to the extent that are his thoughts. Yet, in accordance with Jung's analytical study of the type, one finds that underneath this conventional disguise quite other things are slumbering. For instance when Nina calls him "dear old Charlie"—words that remind him only too sharply of the position he holds in her life—he thinks in agony,

God damn in hell ... dear old Charlie!

But none of this torture is seen on the surface, for with a genial smile he says,

I'll have to propose, Nina, if you continue to be my severest critic! I'm a stickler for these little literary conventions, you know.

(I, p. 211.)

These hidden feelings come to light only when Marsden is holding a clinical consultation with himself, or when from the depths of the uncon-

scious come fleeting thoughts that have escaped his repression mechanism.

It is with these illuminating truths that the student of psychology is mostly concerned, for it is in them that the character of Marsden is truly revealed—a character as tragic as that of Wina's and tragic also for the same reason, namely, that, because of the conflict with the sex instinct, his life also, instead of developing in a normal way, becomes that of a neurotic—in this instance one who is constantly torn between desire and repulsion.

The cause for Marsden's neurotic state is not hard to find. It is entirely dependent upon his infantile past where, though he is now a middle-aged man, he is still emotionally "fixed." In Marsden O'Neill is again presenting a literary example of the Oedipus-complex. The Oedipus-complex, according to Professor McDougall (Outline of Abnormal Psychology, p. 418), is of prime importance to most psychoanalysts for whom it is an innate feature of the constitution of all human beings; it thus plays an important rôle in psychoneuroses as well as in the development of the normal individual. "For the attribution of this enormous rôle to the incestuous fixation of the infant on the parent of the opposite sex, Freud himself is chiefly responsible," says Professor McDougall. It is rather difficult to prove conclusively whether O'Neill is following Freud with the implied emphasis on the sexual desire of the child; or whether he here accepts Jung's theory, as he does in the presentation of the same complex in Lynema, where this desire for the mother is a desire for return to the blissful condition in utero in which one was protected by the mother from all outside influences (Dunlap, Mysticism, Freudianism and Scientific Psychology, p. 58); or whether he is merely restating what, by psychologists such as Weyn-inger, is accepted as a commonplace in infantile relationships—the

fixation of the son's love on the mother without the above mentioned implications (The Human Mind, p. 310). It is, however, difficult not to see the significance of certain passages which point to a Freudian interpretation of the complex. As Marsden reviews in his mind his experience in "the dollar house" with the Italian girl, he concludes the account of the episode with this remark:

... back at the hotel I waited till they [his companions who insisted on the "test of manhood"] were asleep ... then sobbed ... thinking of Mother ... feeling I had defiled her ... and myself ... forever! ...

(I, p. 15.)

A little later in the same act after Marsden has listened to Professor Leeds confess that he was jealous of his daughter's lover and heard him beg Gina for forgiveness, he thinks,

In short, forgive us our possessing as we forgive those who possessed before us ...

And fearing that the significance of the words has not been caught, O'Neill has him add,

Mother must be wondering what keeps me so long ... it's time for tea ... I must go home ...

(I, p. 33.)

A third passage is not so telling, and yet there clings to it a certain evidence that throws the balance on the Freudian side. Evans, upon hearing Marsden say that his mother is not so well, remarks that one must be careful of everything at her age, that she must be over sixty-five years old. The allusion to his mother's age makes Marsden bristle with indignation:

You're quite out there! She's still under sixty-five—and in health and spirits she isn't more than fifty! Everyone remarks that!

And then, annoyed with himself, he asks,

Why did I lie to him about her age?

(IV, pp. 130-131.)

The question addressed to himself is important, for it proves definitely that Maroden is wholly unaware of any unnatural love between him and his mother. He can not see that he desires his mother to be young—only slightly older than he—so that she may be more attractive to him sexually. The infantile fixation is, of course, understood by Freud to be an unconscious attachment of the sexual libido to certain infantile phantasies surrounding the mother (Introductory Lectures, p. 127).

Because his affections were centered on his mother and remained fixed there after the time that the impulse, normal to begin with, should have undergone complete destruction, Maroden's early adolescent life follows the pattern of those who fail to outgrow the Oedipus-complex. His attachment to his mother must have caused a rivalry with his father which led to indifference and perhaps even hostility. Maroden, thinking back to the time of his father's death, says to himself,

... his voice had withdrawn so far away ... I couldn't understand him ... what son can ever understand? ... always too near, too soon, too distant or too late! ...

His face becomes sad at the memory of the bewildered suffering of the adolescent boy.

(I, p. 13.)

And at the preparatory school there were no love affairs with girls who should normally displace his mother. Instead there was only the friendship with Jack Frazer, "the dead game sport," for whom Maroden had such an intense admiration.

Now, as he thinks about Hina, he remembers that his mother "seemed always jealous" over his concern for her, and he wonders,

... why have I never fallen in love with Hina?  
... could I? ... that way?

(I, p. 14.)

The answer is plainly, "No"; his emotions are tied to his mother, and

therefore he will never be able to enjoy a complete love for this woman  
 nor ever be able to express it. With a tortured sigh, he admits it is  
 all dreams with me! my sex life among the phantoms!

...

(I, p. 14.)

When Marsden thinks of Nina, he in no sense permits her to replace his  
 mother. Upon her return from the hospital a sick, tormented soul,  
 he thinks eagerly:

If she'd settle down here ... I could come over  
 every day ... I'd nurse her ... Mother home ...  
 Nina here ... how I could work then! ...

(II, p. 53.)

The identification with his mother which is already suggested here  
 becomes more apparent in his relation with Nina as the drama proceeds.  
 Freud says that this process of identification is closely bound up with  
 the Oedipus-complex. The result is that the ego of the son becomes  
 like that of the mother, behaving in certain respects in the same way,  
 imitating it, and as it were, taking it into itself. (Introductory  
Lectures, p. 90 ff.). As Nina sinks into his lap and begins to cry  
 because of the agony in her soul, Marsden kisses her hair reverently  
 and in a transport of happiness whispers ecstatically:

As I dreamed ... with a deeper sweetness! ...  
 There ... this is all my desire ... I am this  
 kind of lover ... this is my love ... she is my  
 girl ... not woman ... my little girl ... and I  
 am brave because of her little girl's pure love  
 ... and I am proud ... no more afraid ... no  
 more ashamed of being pure! ...

(II, p. 79.)

He is a mother, his mother, comforting a child, as he has been comforted  
 all his life. And finally when the "interlude of trial and preparation"  
 is at an end and nothing remains of desire and passion, and happiness  
 consists only in peace, Marsden tells Nina that all his life he has  
 waited to bring her peace—peace, not love, not desire. In the end it

is Nina who asks Marsden if he wants to marry her, while he thinks with a strange ecstasy,

I knew the time would come at last when I would  
hear her ask that! ... I could never have said  
it, never! ...

(IX, p. 347.)

His mother having been dead a number of years and also his sister Jane, who came to live with him and, after a fashion, to take his mother's place, Marsden now enters into the only relationship with another woman possible for him, a relationship that passes beyond desire and that finally establishes his compensatory identification with his mother. Nina and Marsden are to live in her father's old home, for his would not be suitable—"Mother and Jane live there in memory." The Oedipus-complex which has shaped his life has made it in a simple mold; at least, as the introvert reviews it in poetic retrospection, he sees it thus:

... my life a cool green shade wherein comes no  
scorching sear of sun of passion and possession to  
wither the heart with bitter poisons ... my life  
gathering roses, coolly crimson, in sheltered  
gardens, on late afternoons in love with evening  
... roses heavy with after-blooming of the long  
day, desiring evening ... my life is evening ...  
Nina is a rose, my rose, exhausted by the long,  
hot day, leaning wearily towards peace. ...

(IX, p. 380.)

In so far as the figure applies to Marsden's outer life, it is apt enough; surely none of the burning heat that seared the lives of Nina and Darrell ever touched him in his shady nook. And yet if one looks inward, one finds a hidden flame in the conflict of his life that withered and scorched his very soul. This conflict centers about his desire to live a normal sex life and his repulsion at the very thought of sex experience. Where there is a conflict there is also a state of neurosis, and as long as the factor of the conflict remains unconscious

the neurosis will continue. With Freud the theory of neurosis is a sexual one which implies that a conflict is always erotic. Why is it always an erotic conflict rather than any other that causes the neurosis? Even Carl Jung, who disagrees with Freud in the importance that the latter gives to the sex instinct, admits that as a matter of fact the erotic conflict is always found to be the pathogenic agent (Analytical Psychology, p. 368). The unconscious factor in Maraden's conflict is, as has been shown, his Oedipus-complex. It has also been shown that the complex as presented by O'Neill has a certain sexual significance which, of course, is hidden from Maraden but which is the cause of his inability to love Nina as he should like to; in other words, the conflict is erotic. However, the fixation of the libidinal energy upon the mother does not in itself explain Maraden's repulsion when he thinks in terms of sex experience. The reason for his reaction becomes obvious when a certain traumatic experience which he underwent in his adolescent period is considered with his Oedipus-conflict.

It was Easter vacation when Jack Frazer insisted that they visit "the dollar house," when he pointed to the Italian girl with the pretty, vicious face under caked powder and rouge and said, "Take her." Back at the hotel he began to sob, thinking of his mother, "feeling I had defiled her . . . and myself . . . forever!" Always that memory.

Why does my mind have to dwell on that? ... too silly ... no importance really ... an incident such as any boy of my age ...

(I, p. 15.)

The reason why Maraden can not forget is easily enough understood. Were it a question of the trauma alone, intense as it was, he would in time have recovered from the experience. Dr. Jung, in setting forth the researches carried on by Freud in the field of traumatic experience, says (Analytical Psychology, p. 363):



(in all such cases of traumatic experiences analysed up to the present] there co-exists a special kind of disturbance which can only be described as a derangement in the sphere of love. Not all of us give due credit to the anomalous nature of love, reaching high as heaven, sinking low as hell, uniting in itself all extremes of good and evil, of lofty and low.

It is not the trauma, then, that determined Marsden's neurotic behavior towards sex, but the disturbance that it caused in his Oedipus-complex.

It was the thought that he had defiled his mother that made the experience pathogenic; in other words, his Oedipus-complex is the true cause of his conflict with normal sex expression.

In this conflict the scene in the dollar house is lived over many times, Nina, the woman he wants to love, becoming identified with the Italian prostitute and his mother remaining the love-object to which he must cling and for which he must keep his purity. Thinking of Nina after her hospital experience, he makes this observation;

... her eyes seemed cynical ... sick with men ...  
as though I looked into the eyes of a prostitute  
... not that I ever have ... except that once ...  
the dollar house ... hers were like patent leather  
buttons in a saucer of blue milk! ... The devil!  
... what beastly incidents our memories insist on  
cherishing! ... the ugly ... the disgusting ...  
the beautiful things we have to keep diaries to  
remember!

(II, p. 48.)

Later there is this comparison:

She's hard ... like a whore! ... tearing your  
heart with dirty finger nails! ... My Nina! ...  
cruel bitch! ... some day I won't bear it! ...  
I'll scream out the truth about every woman!  
... no kinder at heart than a dollar tart ...  
[Then in a passion of remorse] Forgive me Mother!  
... I didn't mean all! ...

(II, p. 73.)

Even after his mother's death, the bitter conflict lingers on, and perhaps because of the loss of his love-object Marsden's neurotic hatred of sex becomes all the more intense. Finding Darrell and Nina alone in

the room, he thinks:

... there's something in this room! ... something disgusting! ... like a brutal, hairy hand, raw and red, at my throat! ... stench of human life! ... heavy and rank! ... love and hate and passion and possession! ... cruelly indifferent to my loss! ... mocking my loneliness! ... no longer any love for me in any room! ... lust in this room! ... lust with a loathsome jeer taunting my sensitive timidities! ... my purity? ... purity? ... ha! Yes, if you say purient purity! ... lust ogling me for a dollar with oily button Italian eyes! ... In terror What thoughts! ... what a low scoundrel you are! ... and your Mother dead only two weeks! I hate Nina! ...

(V, p. 174.)

And a year later his hatred is just as bitter and his agony at being so alone just as intense. Again, finding the two alone, he rages:

Their honor! ... what an obscure joke! ... the honor of a harlot and a pimp! ... I hate them! ... if only God would strike them dead! ... now! ... and I could see them die! ... I would praise his justice! ... His kindness and mercy to me! ...

(VI, p. 224.)

The agony in Mersden's tortured soul is so intensified because his hatred of passion is only equalled by his desire for it. Striving side by side within the tormented man are the unconscious wish to remain true to his mother, dictated by the unfortunate fixation over which he has no control, and the desire to enjoy the woman he tries to love. No matter how deeply this desire to love has been suppressed, in an unguarded moment it expresses itself with surprising frankness. When Evans asks Mersden, Nina's guardian, for his consent to their marriage, the latter thinks,

... he might be good for Nina ... if she were married to this simpleton would she be faithful? ... and then I? ... what a vile thought! ... I don't mean that! ...

(XI, p. 61.)

Later on in life when the conflict has become less bitter, one finds this revealing passage:

... she knows that I love her without my telling  
 ... she even knows the sort of love it is ...  
 my love is finer than any she has known ... I do  
 not lust for her! ... I would be content if our  
 marriage should be purely the placing of our ashes  
 in the same tomb ... our urns side by side and  
 touching one another ... could the others say as  
 much? ... could they love as deeply? ...

Then suddenly from the unconscious comes one of those startling flashes  
 of truth that reveal so much of what the ego strives to hide.

What! ... platonic heroics at my age! ... do I  
 believe a word of that? ... look at her beautiful  
 eyes! ... wouldn't I give anything in life to see  
 them desire me? ... and the intimacy I'm boasting  
 about, what more does it mean than that I've been  
 playing the dear old Charlie of her girlhood again?  
 ... damned coward and weakling! ...

(VII, p. 258.)

The character of Hareton, tragic as it is as long as the conflict  
 rages, resolves itself naturally enough in the end. Only with the  
 dying out of passion and the soothing forgetfulness that comes with age  
 could the conflict in Hareton come to an end. Now that desire no  
 longer lingered in either him or Eliza, she could become his wife without  
 in any way disturbing the unconscious love-life that he shared with his  
 mother. And so the role of "dear old Charlie" loses its distaste and  
 Hareton says happily,

God bless dear old Charlie ... who, passed beyond  
 desire, has all the luck at last! ...

(IX, p. 352.)

\* \* \* \*

In the character of Darrell, O'Neill consciously or unconsciously  
 brings to the fore two Freudian principles: first, that the repressed  
 sex instinct never ceases to strive after its complete satisfaction;  
 and secondly, that a middle aged man can find new channels of develop-  
 ment or, in other words, sublimate his sex instinct easier than can a  
 woman of the same age who, at that age, is psychologically rigid and

unchangeable.

At the beginning of act five, O'Neill gives the following description of Ned Darrell:

There is a quality about him, provoking and disturbing to women, of intense passion which he has rigidly trained himself to control and set free only for the objective satisfaction of studying his own and their reactions; and so he has come to consider himself immune to love through his scientific understanding of its real sexual nature.

But in spite of his effort to keep repressed any emotional feeling in order that he might use his driving power for his work, he admits that Nina

... always had a strong physical attraction for me ... that time I kissed her ... one reason I've steered clear since ... take no chances on emotional didos ... need all my mind on my work ... got rid of even that slight suspicion ... I'd forgotten all about her.

(IV, p. 159.)

And when Nina suggests that he become the father of her child, he once more tries to be objective:

Let me see ... I am in the laboratory and they are guinea pigs ... in fact, in the interest of science, I can be for the purpose of this experiment, a healthy guinea pig myself and still remain an observer ... I observe my pulse is high, for example, and that's obviously because I am stricken with a recurrence of an old desire ... desire is a natural male reaction to the beauty of the female ... her husband is my friend ... I have always tried to help him.

(IV, p. 151.)

But this objectivity is soon lost in the strength of the passion he feels for Nina.

The struggle between his desire to continue the relations of their afternoons together and his feeling of guilt for having betrayed his friend and deserted his career makes the man bitter and desperate. In remorse he thinks:

This is horrible! ... Sam thinks I'm the finest fellow in the world ... and I do this to him! ... as if he hadn't enough! ... born under a curse! ... I finish him! a doctor! ... God damn it! ... I can see his end! ... never forgive myself ... ..

And remembering that Nina plans to tell Sam the truth after lunch, he concludes desperately:

Got to stop this while there's time! ... ..  
 got me where she wants me! ... then be cruel  
 to me as she is to him! ... love me? ... liar!  
 ... still loves Gordon! ... her body is a trap!  
 ... I'm caught in it! ... she touches my hand,  
 her eyes get in mine, I lose my will! ... ..  
 I'll go away some place ... .. study! ...  
 forget her in work! ...

(V, p. 184.)

By sheer will power Darrell thinks to free himself of his passion. However, the effort is not a success; the year in Europe proved an unequal struggle against his desire for Nina, and the conflict within him left its mark. There are lines of desperation in his face and puffy shadows of dissipation and sleeplessness under his restless, hurried eyes. As he waits to see Nina upon his return, he murmurs:

... .. I'm licked! ... no use fighting it ...  
 I've done my damndest ... work ... booze ... other  
 women ... no use ... I love her! ... always! ...  
 ...

(VI, p. 217.)

And thus Darrell thinks to end the struggle by taking over the rôle of lover, resigning all hope of ever becoming Nina's husband or acknowledging Gordon as his son. In an objective tone he admits:

My experiment with the guinea pigs has been a success ... the ailing ones, Sam, and the female, Nina, have been restored to health and normal function ... only the other male, Ned, seems to have suffered deterioration.

(VI, p. 252.)

So far the story of Ned admirably illustrates Freud's contention that (Beyond the Pleasure Principle, p. 52):

The repressed instinct never ceases to strive after its complete satisfaction which would consist in the repetition of a primary experience of satisfaction; all substitution or reaction-formations and sublimations avail nothing relaxing the continual tension; out of the excess of the satisfaction demanded over that found is born the driving momentum which allows of no abiding in any situation presented to it, but in the poet's words urges ever forward, ever unsubdued' (Mephisto in his study, I).

But the conflict was not so easily ended, and the complete surrender to his passions at the expense of his pride and ambition left its mark on the man. Darrell has become a man with no definite aim or ambition to which he can relate his living. His eyes are embittered and they hide his inner self-resentment behind a pose of cynical indifference. The struggle between the sexual-impulses and ego-impulses is not resolved. Nor can such a struggle ever be resolved, according to Freud (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 373), by giving the victory to one or the other of the opponents, for one will always remain unsatisfied.

After a period of ten years Darrell's struggle is ended in a natural manner. Passion has run its course and satiety has set in. He is a man somewhat beyond middle age, but there has been going on a curious throwback to the doctor he was at the beginning of the drama. He once more has the air of the cool, detached scientist. The puffiness is gone from beneath his eyes, and his face and body have taken on a well-conditioned leanness. Gina, by contrast, looks a great deal older. She is worn-out, embittered, and neurotic. She admits to herself that she is old, and resentful of Darrell, she asks him where he found his fountain of youth. He answers:

That's easy. Work! I've become as interested in biology as I once was in medicine. And not selfishly interested, that's the difference. There's no chance of my becoming a famous biologist and I know it. I'm very much a worker in the ranks. But our

Station is a "huge success," as Sam would say. We've made some damned important discoveries. I say "we." I really mean Preston ... I've found myself in helping him. In that way I feel I've paid my debt—that his work is partly my work. And he acknowledges it. He possesses the rare virtue of gratitude. [With proud affection] He's a fine boy, Nina! I suppose I should say now now he's in his thirties.

(VIII, pp. 289-298.)

The man's conflict has been removed. His libidinal drive has been directed into new channels, and he has successfully sublimated his sexual impulses. But Nina can not separate herself from her libido. Her passion is now centered upon her son, and when this relationship also meets with disappointment, she can only "rot in peace," powerless to direct her drive into further development. Freud says (Introductory Lectures, p. 184):

... it is as though the whole process had been gone through, and remained inaccessible to influence for the future; as though, in fact, the difficult development which leads to femininity had exhausted all the possibilities of the individual.

This description is given in contrast to that of the man who generally makes good use of the possibilities of development laid open to him. In Darrell and Nina is found a literary example of this principle.

Though Darrell finds a healthy solution for his problem, though life in the end fits him into its positive scheme, he is not the least of the tragic figures that O'Neill's universe conspires against, toys with, and degrades. In the many tragic moments of the drama, it is hard to find one more moving than that one in which Darrell cries up to the disappearing airplane the truth that he has hidden all his life though it brought him suffering of the deepest kind,

You're my son, Gordon! You're my— He can't hear! ...

And when Nina also fails to hear, his anguish is complete;

She doesn't hear, either ... Oh, God, so deaf and dumb and blind! ... teach me to be resigned to be an atom!

(IX, p. 350.)

\* \* \* \*

Evans, though he has reached adulthood some time ago, represents an incomplete personality evolution. Not only does he appear to be an overgrown boy because of his bashfulness with women and older men and his coltish--playfulness with his friends, but also because of his immature habit of thinking and expressing himself. Uneasy while Marsden looks at him, he thinks;

Giving me the once-over ... seems like a good egg ... Nina says he is ... suppose I ought to say something about his books, but I can't even remember a title of one.

(II, p. 54.)

Another mark of his fixation at the adolescent stage is his worship of Gordon, the athletic hero. When asked by Marsden if he knew Gordon, he says proudly,

Sure thing! I was in his class! He sure was a wonder, wasn't he?

And when Marsden would console him for being a failure in sports by the remark that the sport hero usually does not star after college, he objects,

Gordon did! In the war! He was an ace! And he always fought just as cleanly as he'd played football! Even the Huns respected him!

(II, p. 58.)

This worship of Gordon may be explained on a psychological basis.

Because the boy was sent away from home at an early age, his love was never fixed on the mother nor later on the father. In Gordon he found someone superior to himself in strength, ability, and prestige. For the father whom he might have taken for hero, he substituted another.



Evans, because he felt inferior, may have identified himself with Gordon in order to gain a certain recognition.

"This Gordon worshipper must be the apple of Nina's eye," thinks Marsden, and it may explain in a small way why Nina consented to marry him. Always a prey to his inferiority, Evans can hardly believe his good fortune in the role of Nina's husband. He is still collegiate to the last degree. He radiates love and devotion and boyish adoration. There is only one thing that marrs his happiness. Nina had wanted a baby. He reflects,

... why she married me ... and I know she's felt  
right along that then she'd love me ... really  
love me ... I wonder why ... ought to have happened  
before this ... hope it's nothing wrong ... with  
me! ...

(III, p. 100.)

It is this concern that soon dispirits Evans, that causes the collegiate clothes to no longer look natty, and that makes it impossible for him to please his employer with clever advertising literature. Nina has ceased to love him, he believes:

... she crashed ... strain of waiting and hoping  
... and nothing happening ... that's what did  
it ... my fault! ... God, if we'd only have a  
kid! ... then I'd show them all I could do! ...  
(IV, pp. 115-116.)

In the following act it is all the more evident by the pitiable, harried expression in his face and by his chronic nervous state, that Evans is suffering from a conflict regarding his impotency. Without the proof he desires for his virility, he considers the failure in terms of a personal inferiority. Having lost his job and sensing that Nina hates him, he tries to tell himself that he must free her:

... she wanted children and you haven't been able  
... if she's married someone else ... if  
Gordon had lived and married her ... you'd  
better resign from the whole game ... with a gun! ...  
(V, p. 182.)

It took only Darrell's assurance that he would be a father to bring about a startling change in Evans. In a short time the look of worry and self-conscious inferiority leaves his face. He moves with the confidence of a man who has found his place in the world. By some odd fancy of Fate for poetic-justice, Evans is the only one to attain some degree of lasting happiness even though that happiness is based on a lie.

\* \* \* \*

Professor Leeds is in a situation much like that of Marsden, the only difference being that it is a father-daughter instead of a mother-son attachment. No matter how much he tries to make himself believe that he wants his daughter to live her own life, he yet refuses to permit her to have a lover other than himself. He hated Gordon not for himself, but because he had come to take over his place in Nina's affection and thus force him into his position of father.

It is this erotic love for his daughter that rules the professor's every action. Its power is all the stronger because he will not admit its presence until he is forced to do so. Always he tells himself, and others as well, that it was for Nina's sake, not his own, that he interfered with Gordon's plan. Only when Nina confronts him with the lie will he make the painful confession, excusing himself as best he can: "Let us say that I persuaded myself it was for your sake. That may be true. You are young. You think one can live with truth. Very well. It is also true I was jealous of Gordon. I was alone and I wanted to keep your love. I hated him as one hates a thief one may not accuse nor punish. I did my best to prevent your marriage. I was glad when he died. There. Is that what you wish me to say?"

Professor Leeds is willing to tolerate Marsden's interest in his

daughter, for subconsciously he knows that Marsden is in love with his own mother. Marsden is used as a foil by which the professor for a time succeeded in hiding from himself his real motives. In the end the man's actions lead only to defeat for himself and to tragedy for his daughter.

The theme suggested in the characters of Professor Leeds and Marsden receives fuller development in Mourning Becomes Electra.

## DYNAMO

Dynamo, stamped by critics as O'Neill's worst play because of its lack of artistry and its failure to solve in any way the religious problem which the dramatist claims confronts us today, is yet of deep interest to the student of modern psychology, for in it are found the teachings of the psychoanalysts with which O'Neill acknowledged himself to be familiar.

Reuben, the protagonist of the play, is the son of a fundamentalist country minister. He is a boy of seventeen, shy and sensitive. He speaks timidly and hesitatingly as might a boy much younger. As a protection against the outer world, he instinctively imitates his father's booming voice though his natural manner of speaking is that of feminine gentleness. Brought up in the narrow confines of a religion where God is a half-malign creature who is ever ready to punish, he has developed a superstitious fear which, so long as it lasts, controls his independent thinking. He is, in the words of his flippant, slangy sweetheart, a "Mama's boy." The following lines illustrate Reuben's nature vividly and conclusively. The boy is just returning home from a visit with the atheist Fife and is thinking over the amazing story told him. An electrical storm is in process. Reuben thinks to himself:

... Why hasn't He done something to Fife? ...  
 I should think He'd have to punish adultery and  
 murder ... if there is a God ...  
(There is a great flash of lightning and he stands  
paralyzed with superstitious terror)

It comes every time! ... when I deny! ...  
 (More and more obsessed by a feeling of guilt,  
of being a condemned sinner alone in the  
threatening night)  
 Fate's damned me with him! ... there's no use  
 praying! ... it's getting blacker! ... I'm  
 afraid of God! ...  
 (There is a crash of thunder. He cowers,  
trembling--then cries like a frightened little  
boy) Mother! Mother!

(I, p. 39.)

Such, then, is the character of Reuben at the beginning of the play.

This dependence on the mother so strongly emphasized at the start remains throughout the play as one of the most striking characteristics of the leading character, and therefore it becomes an important phase of the psychology found in the drama. Whether or not O'Neill believes in Freud's psychology of the family can not be absolutely proved, but striking similarities in thought arrest the attention of one interested in the dramatist's application of psychological theories.

Freud has outlined the drama of the individual in terms of the early experience in the family. The experience of birth and the early attachment to the mother which develops into the Oedipus-complex with its accompanying hatred of the father, through jealousy and fear, determine to a large extent the main outlines of the personality of the man and furnish the basis of future conflicts (New Introductory Lectures, p. 124). This mother-son complex, Freud states, often remains throughout life.

It seems that the Reuben of Dynasty is indeed the victim of too great a dependence on the mother, a dependence overcome for a time only to appear again with a force so great that to it the boy must sacrifice life itself in order to find peace in death. The temporary breaking away from the mother is not difficult to explain. Proneness to submit to the demands of the mother has become habitual with Reuben—even to

the point of stimulating him to reveal to her Fife's secret which he has sworn to withhold from everyone. But when the mother interferes with the newly awakened erotic love of the adolescent boy, a conflict arises within him and causes confusion. However, the emotional crisis which Reuben has just experienced through his love for Ada strengthens him against even his mother, and for a time he finds independence. This newly found freedom, together with his discovery of his mother's duplicity, makes it possible for him to think:

... she cheated me! ... when I trusted her! ...  
when I loved her better than anyone in the world!  
(He cries out in a passion of reproach)  
Oh, Mother! Mother!

(I, p. 67.)

And a little later when his mother through insane jealousy calls his love a streetwalker, the boy finds courage to say as he glares at her,

I'm glad you're talking like that! It shows you  
up and I can hate you now! ... You're not mother  
any more! I'll do without a mother rather than  
have your kind!

(I, p. 73.)

Swiftly his action to this unaccustomed spirit of independence, Reuben runs away from home and parental ties.

Fifteen months later he reappears, much older than his years. A hard look, a defensive callousness, has taken the place of the timid, diffident attitude of the boy in the first act. Why, after damning his family and its God, has he come back? An instinctive longing to see his mother proved stronger than his desire "to learn about everything." The news of her death completely stuns him. That he never fully disengaged himself from his mother's influence, he acknowledges to himself when, upon hearing the exact time that she died, he thinks,

Two weeks ... it was about then I first felt that  
hunch to come home and see her ... that's damned  
queer ...

(II, p. 106.)

When Reuben learns that his mother died with the words he had written her on her lips, his thoughts become excited:

"We have electrocuted your God. Don't be a fool"  
 ... that's what I kept writing her ... her last  
 words! ... then I'd converted her away from his God!  
 ... the dying see things beyond ... she saw I'd  
 found the right path to truth! ...  
 (His eyes shine with a new elation)  
 By God, I'll go on now all right! ...  
 (He laughs aloud to himself exultantly)

(II, p. 111.)

Here he begins to identify his mother with the new religion that is slowly evolving itself in his mind. She, though dead, is dominating him again, and he is eager to come closer to her. He has declined his father's invitation to occupy his old room. Then an idea flashes into his head:

But maybe Mother'd want me to? ... maybe I'd get  
 some message from her if I stayed here? ...

(II, p. 112.)

In his room the love for his mother rushes back. Does not the following thought suggest a Freudian fixation or regression to an earlier stage of libidinal development with its characteristic jealous hatred of the father?

... did Mother really love the old man? ... she  
 must have or how could she stand him? ... and she  
 made me with him ... act of Nature ... like me and  
 Ada ...

(He jumps to his feet distractedly)  
 God, that seems lousy somehow! ... I don't want  
 to think of it! ...

And feeling very lonely though Ada has just given him a passionate assurance of her love, he continues to think about his mother:

I'd like to reach her somehow ... No one knows  
 what happens after death ... even science doesn't  
 ... there may be some kind of hereafter ... I used  
 to kneel down here and say my prayers ... she  
 taught them to me ... then she'd tuck me in, even  
 after I'd grown up ... and kiss me good night ...

(II, pp. 122-123.)

More and more, as Reuben struggles to set up some kind of god that he can worship, does he identify his mother with his curious mysticism. The great dynamo in the hydro-electric plant takes on the shape of a body—

... not a man's ... round like a woman's ... as if it had breasts ... but not like a girl ... not like Ada ... no, like a woman ... like her mother ... or mine ... a great dark mother ... that's what the dynamo is! ... that's what life is! ...

(II, p. 126.)

Feeling that he must pray to the God Electricity whose image is the dynamo, Reuben excuses his strange action to himself with the thought,

But I feel it's right ... I feel Mother wants me to ... it's the least I can do for her ... to say a prayer ...

(He gets down on his knees and prays aloud to the dynamo)

Oh, Mother of Life, my mother is dead, she has passed back into you, tell her to forgive me, and to help me find your truth!

(II, p. 127.)

And with this prayer the identification is completed. The mother has become one with his god, and from now on she exercises divine direction over the boy whose life she dominated from infancy.

In the last act Reuben has grown very thin, his face is gaunt and pale with eyes deeply sunken. In his feverish mind his love for his mother and his desire to be the saviour of a new religion become greatly confused. He tells Mrs. Fife that the Mother of Eternal Life, Electricity, whose Divine Image on earth is Dynamo, wants some man to love her purely so that she may give him the secret of truth. Thus, this man will become the new saviour who will bring happiness to earth. Reuben is determined to be that man. In this mad delusion the mother plays an important part:

I know the miracle will happen to me tonight because I had a message from my Mother last night. I woke and saw her standing besides my bed—just as she



used to when she came in to kiss me good night—  
and she smiled and held out her arms to me. I  
know she came from the spirit of the Great Mother  
into which she passed when she died to tell me  
she had at last found me worthy of her love.

(III, p. 154.)

But the role of the pure saviour demands too great a control over  
human nature. To make a final test, to prove himself purified, Reuben  
thinks he will kiss Ada. He looks at her, lurches forward, and with  
a wild moon of passion takes her in his arms. He is next shown sobbing  
broken heartedly while he thinks:

Mother! ... I've betrayed you ... you will never  
bless me with the miracle now! ... you have shut  
me from your heart forever! ...

And running from his sweetheart, haunted by remorse,

Mother! ... have mercy on me! ... I hate her now!  
... as much as you hate her! (All too conscious  
of the intense hatred his mother held for Ada)  
... what can I do to get you to forgive me? ...  
tell me! ... yes! ... I hear you, Mother! ...  
and then you'll forgive me and I can come to you!  
...

(III, pp. 154-155.)

With a terrible look of murder in his eyes, he runs after Ada calling,  
"Harlot!"

Harlot! ... that's what Mother called her!

(III, p. 156.)

And in fanatical frenzy he shoots the girl, lets the gun fall from his  
hand, and calls pitifully,

Ada! I didn't mean to hurt you!  
(Then thinking with an anguished appeal)  
Mother! ... where are you? ... I did it for your  
sake! ... why don't you call to me? ... don't  
leave me alone! ...

(III, p. 157.)

In a panic of terror the man runs from the scene of tragedy, much as  
the boy ran in the earlier act from the lightning, to find safety near  
his mother. He rushes through the switchboard room and down the stairs

to the dynamo-room floor where he lunges for the rungs on the dynamo's side and climbs up.

(Pleading to the dynamo like a little boy)  
I don't want any miracle, Mother! I don't want  
to know the truth! I only want you to hide me,  
Mother! Never let me go from you again! Please,  
Mother!

(III, p. 158.)

Then he throws his arms out over the exciter, his hands grasp the carbon brushes, there is a bluish light, and—

Simultaneously Reuben's voice rises in a moan that is a mingling of pain and loving consummation, and this cry dies into a sound that is like the crooning of a baby and merges and is lost in the dynamo's hum.  
(III, p. 158.)

And with this dramatic climax O'Neill brings to a close the portrayal of an amazing mother-son relationship.

According to Freudian psychology (General Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 292), the choice of a love object is made in the infantile stage, the son fixing his affections on the mother. Though the choice of an object is feeble then, it nevertheless sets the direction for the choice of an object in puberty. At that time very intense emotional experiences are brought into play and directed toward the Oedipus-complex, or utilized in the reaction to it. But since their presuppositions have become insupportable, they must remain outside of consciousness. From this time, the individual must devote himself to the task of freeing himself from his parents, and only after he has freed himself can he cease to be a child and become a member of the social community.

Reuben for a time succeeded in freeing himself from his libidinous wishes for his mother and utilized them in the quest for a foreign object for his love, Ada. He set himself to a second task, that of freeing himself from the authority of his father, a father whom he consciously feared and hated. But these tasks were too great to be success-

fully solved. The mother, though dead, won back her son's devotion, and the father, still hated, domineered again, not, it is true, in the same old way of forcing the worship of his God upon his son, but in the son's transferring this worship to a new god—a worship conducted in the identical manner of the father. Clearly Reuben failed to surmount the obstacles of the family milieu and thus failed also to adapt himself to life. He became a victim of infantile maladjustment.

After O'Neill's representing the dying cry of Reuben as "a sound that is like the cooing of a baby," one is led to wonder whether he shares the belief of Otto Rank, Freud's associate in the clinic in Vienna, that a desire for a return to the mother's womb is supposed to underlie all our later behavior. This desire, according to Rank, exists because passage to the outer world bombards the infant with stimuli; he is filled with acute distress and desires to return to his safe haven. In later years, whenever the world is too much for the individual, this desire comes over him and is a strong unconscious interest (The Psychology of Human Conflict, p. 194). This longing is implied in the following quotation. Reuben is speaking to Mrs. Fife:

Her song is there—Dynamo's— isn't that the  
greatest poem of all—the poem of eternal life?  
And listen to the water rushing over the dam!  
Like music! It's as if that sound was cool water  
washing over my body! —washing all dirt and sin  
away! Like some one singing me to sleep—my  
mother—when I was a kid—calling me back to some-  
where far off where I'd been once long ago and  
known peace!

(II, p. 152.)

When studied from the position of the mother, this mother-son situation in Dynamo takes on a more erotic character. Mrs. Light, fifteen years her husband's junior, appears even younger though her figure has broadened and her attitude, in spite of her rebellious mouth, has become resigned. She has ceased to feel any deep emotion

for the ponderous man with the bullying voice who has replaced her bridegroom. Her affections are now centered in her son who resembles the man she married some twenty years ago. This erotic interest in her son keeps Mrs. Light contented and even happy. However, as soon as she discovers that Reuben has an interest in another woman, she becomes fiercely jealous. Having gone to her son's room and not finding him there, she thinks worriedly:

He's not here! ... he sneaked out! ... the first time he ever did such a thing! ... but how do I know it's the first? ... all the evenings I thought he was here studying ... it can mean only one thing! ... a girl! ... not a good girl! ... it must be that Fife girl! ... That dirty little ... I'd like to see her try to catch my Reuben! ...

Then, as the lightning reveals Reuben hiding in Fife's yard,

Oh! ... there he is! ... watching their house! ... I'll just watch him and make sure ... Oh, Reuben, I can't believe it, you've never noticed girls! ...  
(I, p. 25.)

A woman who carried on a normal relationship with her son would hardly be upset when she found he had left his room without first telling her, nor would she immediately infer that the reason for such unprecedented independence was a girl and "not a good girl" at that.

Filled with suspicion, Mrs. Light goes into the garden and hides behind a hedge where, to her utter despair, she finds the two young people kissing each other:

She kissed him! ... the brazen little harlot! ... where is she taking him? ... I've got to stop her!  
...

(I, p. 37.)

But she can get no farther than the edge of the hedge which, fortunately, is near an open window. Upon hearing her son say that he wants to marry Ada, the woman is overcome by frenzied hatred and jealousy:

Marry her! ... I heard it clear as day! ... respect her like he does me! ... damn her! ...

Oh, I didn't mean to sneer! [After all, she is the minister's wife] ... I don't know what I'm doing! ...  
(Then weeping hysterically and trying to stifle it)  
 Oh, I'll get Hutchins to beat him within an inch of his life ...

(I, p. 48.)

Unconsciously Mrs. Light is playing the rôle of the jilted sweetheart. Any girl who steals the affections of Reuben is her rival and merits her hatred, while the false lover in turn must be made to suffer for his faithlessness.

Later in the evening the unhappy woman permits her intense jealousy to become too obvious and thus brings tragedy upon herself. Reuben, terrified by the storm which he believes is God's way of showing him that he is guilty because he shares Fife's secret, cries,

I'm scared, Mother! I'm guilty! I'm damned!

Whereupon Mrs. Light thinks, startled,

Guilty? ... does he mean he? ... (With sudden revulsion) And to think he's had those same arms hugging that little filthpot this very evening!

(I, p. 65.)

When Reuben fails to make a confession about Ada, and when he frankly states that he wants to marry her, the mother becomes insane with jealous rage and urges her husband to beat him. The boy, who has always been protected by his mother and who is wholly unconscious of the erotic conflict going on within her, is overcome by this strange reaction:

Mother's face ... she looks terrible ... she wants him to beat me ... she wants me to yell ...

(I, p. 68.)

It is the beginning of the end. Her duplicity, her hatred of the girl he loves, his sudden realization of his mother's unnatural love are hurried steps that lead to a climax in which Reuben asserts his independence and for a time frees himself from the parent who has so

dominated his life.

It is clear, then, that, in the mother-son complex presented in Dynamo, O'Neill makes the erotic element stronger in the mother than in the son. For the most part, the son relates his desires for his mother to a curious mysticism grown out of his need for a religion that will supplement the one he has relinquished.

\* \* \* \*

The second idea found in the play is of equal interest to one who studies the psychological thinking of O'Neill. This idea seems to be that, no matter what kind of god men set up to worship, their manner of devotion will be identical if they practice it fanatically.

Reuben has been brought up in a religion which is based on fear of an angry, revengeful God. It is the God of the Old Testament, the Jehovah of the Jews, rather than the God of the New Testament where the Godhead is synonymous with love. With this God is associated the same feeling of fear and dread that Reuben feels for his father, the Reverend Light, an implacable bigot who worships the "Lord God of Righteous Vengeance" who can be counted on to strike down his enemies.

The breaking away of Reuben from the tyranny of the father and later from the God whom he respected on the same basis of fear is founded on sound psychological principles. Reuben holds his father in childish awe and fear; his thundering word is not to be challenged, his authority never to be questioned; he is strong, courageous, a sort of partner of God and for this reason needs not fear the Almighty with the abject terror imposed on weaker souls. But there comes a day when Reuben finds his father to be quite otherwise; the defender of righteousness, who should have nothing to fear, cringes and cowers

before the amazed boy. The Reverend Light is in the act of beating his son, thereby hoping to "put the fear of God back into his sinful heart." A severe electric storm is causing much uneasiness, not only in the boy's heart, but in the father's as well. Reuben is expecting the next blow, then stealing a glance at his father's face,

He looks scared! ... it was that lightning! ...  
 I'll never be scared of lightning again! ...  
(Then resolutely)  
 I'll be damned if I'm going to let him beat me! ...  
 (I, p. 68.)

With this thought he jumps to his feet and faces his father defiantly. From now on the father no longer evokes awe because conflicting responses have prevailed in the father's presence. He showed himself to be a coward.

If the father is just a fraud, perhaps the God he worships is another. Now is the time to clear up this fallacy, once and for all. Fiercely Reuben shouts to his father above the roll of the thunder,

You'll never dare touch me again, you old fool!  
 I'm not scared of you or your God any more!

And addressing the lightning,

Shoot away, Old Bosoi! I'm not scared of You!

It occurs to the boy to make a final test. Turning to his mother with a hard, mocking laugh,

What's the matter? Do you still believe in his  
 fool God? I'll show you!

Then addressing the sky with insulting insolence,

If there is a God let Him strike me dead this  
 second! I dare Him!

And with a triumphant laugh,

There! Didn't I tell you!

(I, pp. 76-79.)

But to be rid of God and authority, to be freed of the habit of

worship when this had been so firmly fixed does not lead psychologically to happiness, but to confusion and conflict. A habit can not so easily be side-tracked nor broken up. The old set of worshipful habits is still intact and must be attached to a new end. In Reuben's heart there is nothing to take the place of the faith of which he has been robbed. The boy sees in his father a frenzied bigot whose principles are found to be based on hypocrisy, meanness, and utter rottenness. He must find the way to truth by another way. In his confused adolescent mind, he thinks that in electricity there may be something to stand in awe of, to worship as a positive force. "It all comes down to electricity in the end. What the fool preachers call God is in electricity somewhere."

A little later the belief in electricity as the "Eternal Mother of Life" becomes very plausible to the boy. Finding in Mrs. Fife a ready listener, he makes it all so very clear:

Did I tell you that our blood plasma is the same right now as the sea was when life came out of it? We've got the sea in our blood still! It's what makes our hearts live! And it's the sea rising up in clouds, falling on the earth in rain, made that river that drives the turbines that drive Dynamo! The sea makes her heart beat, too! —but the sea is only hydrogen and oxygen and minerals, and they're only atoms, and atoms are only protons and electrons—even our blood and the sea are only electricity in the end! And think of the stars driving through space, round and round, just like the electrons in the atom! But there must be a center around which all this moves, mustn't there? There is in everything else! And that center must be the Great Mother of Eternal Life, Electricity, and Dynamo is her Divine Image on earth!

(III, pp. 133-134.)

The fact most interesting from the psychological point of view is that this new scientific god is worshipped according to the same formula prescribed by the fundamentalist father. The dynamo becomes the image of the new god, the power house represents the church, and



Reuben himself is to become the new saviour who will bring peace on earth. Even the prayers addressed to the new god follow the old patterns. Reuben kneels before the dynamo and stretches his arms out supplicatingly as he prays,

O Dynamo, who gives life to things, hear my  
prayer! Grant me the miracle of your love!

(III, p. 139.)

The old combination of habits has remained unaltered, only the object, or, in the more scientific term of modern psychology, the cue, has been exchanged. The same fanaticism that marks the father's devotion to his God now characterizes the son's. One reveres Jehovah; the other Dynamo. But both serve a god who must be appeased, who must be reconciled. And finally, the god of Reuben in the manner of the minister's angry God, is obdurate about the forces of nature in man—a god, oddly enough, who is the very deification of the forces in nature. The tragic end of the play shows clearly enough what O'Neill intends that it should—"the failure of science and materialism to give a satisfying new one [God] for the surviving primitive religious instinct to find a meaning for life in, and to comfort its fears of death with" (American Mercury, March 1929, p. 119). The play is a bitter satire both on the bigotry of fundamentalism and the bigotry of science-worshippers.

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When the student of psychology hears Reuben declare "that our blood plasma is the same right now as the sea was when life came out of it"; that we have the sea in our blood still, and that it is the sea that makes our hearts live; that the sea, rising in clouds and falling to earth as rain, makes the rivers that in the end generate electricity; that the sea, made of hydrogen, oxygen and minerals, when analyzed is

but atoms, and atoms are but protons and electrons; that "even our blood and the sea are only electricity in the end"—when, to repeat, the student of psychology listens to this piece of mysticism, he at once thinks of Carl Jung and his contribution to psychology—the idea of the collective psyche. Jung, in defining the collective unconscious, says (Analytical Psychology, chap. XIV, p. 432):

The collective unconscious is the sediment of all the experience of the universe of all time, and is also an image of the universe that has been in process of formation for untold ages.

With Freud the contents of the unconscious are limited to infantile wish-tendencies, which are repressed on account of the incompatibility of their character; with Jung the unconscious includes not only this which comes from personal experience, but also that which comes from impersonal experience, the accumulated experience of the universe of all time. In the individual there is the conscious and the unconscious, the person and the collective psyche. What we call personality is really an excerpt of the collective psyche, for it appears to consist of a number of universal basic human qualities of which it is a priori unconscious and also of a series of impulses and forms which might just as well have been conscious but were arbitrarily repressed. The term persona is an excellent one, for originally the word referred to the mask that the actor wore which served to indicate the character in which he appeared. The individual, then, is only a mask of the collective psyche, a mask which simulates individuality, for at bottom the individual is but the collective psyche.

Now it happens in life that sometimes this persona is resolved into the collective psyche; that is, the unconscious is drawn into the conscious. This leads to what Jung and his followers call "God-Almightiness." One believes himself to be the possessor of the absolute

truth that has yet to be discovered; of the conclusive knowledge which would be the people's salvation. Weak minds run a considerable risk of succumbing to this condition. Obtaining access to the collective psyche signifies a renewal of life for them. It is desirable to retain a hold on this new "Lebensgefühl"; therefore they do not want to be deprived of the rich values that lie buried in the collective psyche and they will endeavor to retain their newly gained union with the primal cause of life. Identification seems to be the nearest way to it, for the merging of the persona in the collective psyche is a veritable lure to unite one's self with this ocean of divinity and to become absorbed in it (Analytical Psychology, chap. XV, pp. 445 ff.).

It is surprising how well Reuben fits into the picture of one afflicted with this curious complex called "God-Almightiness." Not of a strong mind, he easily became a victim of an obsession. He believed himself the possessor of a great truth that was the secret of the universe. He tried to extinguish the persona in renouncing all manifestations of the individual and, in striving, to tune his ears so that the music of his god might become intelligible. And finally, he tried to get back into the very source from which he originated. The sea from whence he came, the blood that now flowed in his veins—all became one with the prime source—electricity. O'Neill must have been consciously or unconsciously influenced by what the brilliant psychologist called "this piece of mysticism [which] belongs to every finer individual; just as the 'yearning for the mother'—the looking back to the source whence one originated—is innate in every one" (p. 462).

\* \* \* \*

Since dreams have come to have a new significance to the psychologist from the time that Freud interested the world in his theory of dreams, and since three dreams are described in Dynamo, these deserve consideration by virtue of the psychological value that O'Neill must have placed in them. Joseph Jastrow in his book, The House that Freud Built (p. 52), says this about the value of dreams: "Freud's concept of dreams is a valuable contribution to the illumination of the psychic stream."

The first of these dreams is one that comes to the Reverend Light after his wife's death. Life has become very empty for him; he has been asking the Lord how long he must endure. Then, with a heavy sigh,

He sleep again last night except for a few minutes ... and then nightmare ... I dreamed Amelia was in my arms ... and Reuben came and beckoned her and she went away with him ...  
(He shudders, flinging off the memory—then wondering bitterly)  
 Does that dream mean Reuben is dead, too?...

(II, pp. 86-87.)

The dream is closely related to the conscious wish or fantasy. In the words of Freud it is "an attempted wish-fulfilment." In dreams, emotions rule; urges, hitherto repressed, push forward; the Id, the great unconscious, the source of instinctive energy for the individual, that which is basic, primitive, finds its way, through the dream, into the conscious. The unconscious impulse is the real creator of the dream. Like every other instinctive impulse it can do no other than seek its own satisfaction, and this is the meaning of all dreaming (New Introductory Lectures, p. 31).

The minister's life has been a continuous struggle against the flesh. He frankly admits to himself that his love for Amelia, his wife, has been "one long desire of the senses." It is no wonder that the erotic tension in the man should find relief in a dream experience, for

while one is asleep the unconscious finds greater freedom.

However, there is the dream censor that must be encountered, that hampers expression when the conscious, or the Ego that holds in check the Id, is fast asleep. The dreamer will recognize many dream thoughts, as did the minister in the dream just quoted, but one he may deny or at least refuse to recognize. This thought comes directly from the unconscious, a child of the night, which escaped the dream-censor. This unconscious impulse is the real creator of the dream. Furthermore, each dream has two parts. That which the dream relates, Freud calls the manifest dream; that which is hidden, the latent dream thoughts (General Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 96).

This psychology of dreams must be well known to O'Neill, for the Reverend Light's dream is an excellent example of such machinery. The dream content—Amelia's being in his arms and then her being taken from him by Reuben—is acknowledged by the minister. Now what is the latent thought, that "thief of the night" who stole past the dream-censor, that thought which Light will not admit? Unconsciously the man associates himself with it when he asks, "Does that dream mean that Reuben is dead, too?" Did he not unconsciously desire the death of the son many times who robbed him of his wife's love? Light admits to his son that he hated him, that he thought him a rival:

When I read them [the letters] I realized that  
Amelia had been thinking of you all the time.  
And I felt betrayed! I hated her and you! I  
was insane with hatred! God forgive me!

(II, p. 108.)

Is it not plausible, then, that this hatred, kept for the most part in the unconscious, that hinterland of passions and instincts where no moral law is taken into account, should here desire the death of the one who steals the love object of the passions? A thought so incompatible with the religious teachings of the Reverend Light would

never be openly admitted; however, in the latent dream thought it appears all too clearly—also why did the dramatist have him speak of Reuben's death at this critical point? Amelia lay in his arms; Reuben came and she went away with him. The dream breaks off, Light shudders, flinging off the memory—of what? possibly the part of the dream he forgot—the part, possibly, that dealt with Reuben's death, the part that his conscious self could not accept.

Just as the father was tormented by erotic dreams, so also the son. In Reuben the conflict between sex instinct and his fanatical religion is perhaps even greater.

... Ada keeps coming in dreams ... her body ...  
I've beaten myself with my belt ... I can't  
keep on much longer ...

(III, p. 136.)

Here again as before, the dream is in its essence a symbolic vice for repressed desires which are in conflict with the ideals of the individual. This is Freud's conception of dreams. Certainly here, in O'Neill, we find none of the compensatory qualities that Jung would ascribe to dreams.

Freud, in How Introductory Lectures (p. 28), speaks of harmless dream-psychosis which is the result of a conscious willed, and only temporary, withdrawal from the external world. Such is the basis of the last dream described in the play. Perhaps this dream is as much vision as anything else, for Reuben, speaking of his mother, says,

I woke up and saw her standing besides my bed—  
just as she used to when she came in to kiss me  
good night—and she smiled and held out her arms  
to me.

(III, p. 134.)

If this is a vision or delusion, it nevertheless, according to Freud, belongs to the same pathological process as the dream, though it occurs under conditions that are less a part of normal life. O'Neill,

then, very wisely chose a vision rather than a dream to interpret the boy's disturbed normality.

\* \* \* \*

Dynamo, in striking contrast to a play such as The Straw, is a denial instead of an affirmation of life. Here external realities count for nothing at all while overwhelming emphasis is placed on the search for an inner truth. It is a play of sinister conflicts; of destroyed faiths that make of a shy, sensitive boy a cold, calculating man; of an obsession growing out of a need to believe in something; and of a strange regression that finally brings oblivion to a tortured soul seeking peace as a crooning baby in the arms of a mother god. It is a play wherein are expressed the theories of a school of psychology headed by Freud, Jung, and Rank. Finally it is a play that cries out against the scientific materialism of the day which answers the quest for a meaning in life only by silence.

## MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA

In Mourning Becomes Electra, one finds a modern psychological drama taking for its plot one of the old Greek tragedies based on a legend. The legend is that of the House of Atreus, and the plays which furnish a suggestion for the plot are three by Aeschylus--Agamemnon, The Libation Bearers, and The Eumenides. The drama presents a study of human inhibitions viewed through the New England Puritan soul. Though it is primarily a study of human passions showing how great and terrible human beings can be when they are in the grip of uncontrollable passion, it is indirectly a defense of modern psychology with a strong Freudian emphasis.

Sexual maladjustment of Puritan New England furnishes the basis for the conflict that struggles relentlessly behind the well adjusted masks presented to the outside world. In early Calvinistic theology, the act of grace was bestowed by God alone; therefore there were no gradations between the saved and the sinners. As time went on the gap between the two groups was not lessened, but it took on a more social aspect. The pillars of society obeyed the rules of the strict moral code, while the unconventional, the less inhibited, were little concerned with rules of right and wrong. Then, with the popularization of certain psychological theories, the cry was raised against the standard of moral values; it was argued that the values must be inverted, that salvation lay not in inhibitions but in more normal rules of sexual morality. In Mourning Becomes Electra, O'Neill shows to what extent the earlier con-



ception of sex morality, where inhibitions and social exclusiveness are based on righteousness, can bring torture to the human soul. The Puritan Mannon never thought of life as an objective in itself. Life had always made Ezra Mannon think of death:

That's always been the Mannon's way of thinking. They went to the white meeting-house on Sabbaths and meditated on death. Life was a dying. Being born was starting to die. Death was being born. How in hell people ever got such notions! The white meeting-house. It stuck in my mind--clean-scrubbed and whitewashed--a temple of death!

("Homecoming," III, p. 738.)

The Mannon family represents a family in decay, a family warped and twisted, living on itself, presenting to the world a blank expression to hide the inner torture. As each character is introduced, emphasis is placed on the mask-like quality of the face. Of Christina Mannon's face O'Neill says, "One is struck at once by the strange impression it gives in repose of being not living flesh but a wonderfully life-like pale mask, in which only the deep-set eyes, of a dark violet blue, are alive." And of Lavinia there is a similar observation: "One is struck by the same strange, life-like mask impression her face gives in repose." They have much to hide from the world, these Mannon. Even the half-Mannon, Brant, is made ever aware of the fact that he is an actor wearing the mask that serves to indicate the character that he represents in this drama of hidden desires, hidden screams, and hidden suffering. O'Neill again speaks of "that peculiar quality his face has in repose; it is a life-like mask rather than living flesh." And of course one is not surprised when of Ezra Mannon it is said that, "the mask-like look of his face in repose is more pronounced in him than in the others." Ever the mask--even on the weakling, Orin. What is surprising is that this effort to mask inner horrors extends far beyond the immediate generation. The Mannon of Colonial days, according to

the portraits that hang on the sitting-room walls, had that same mask-like quality of the living Hannons of this later Civil War period.

Aside from representing the New England Puritans as actors who play conventional roles in the drama written in accordance with a morality built on repression, the mask serves yet another purpose. As long as there is outward conformity to the conventions, quite other things may be going on behind the mask. In spite of conformity there is a desire for freedom, for a life lived out in some far place where the repressed instinct can express itself, and where the smothered dream can become an actual state of being. In Desire Under the Elms, this longing for freedom is symbolized by California; here the symbol becomes the South Sea Islands which Melville has described in his early novels. To each character in the drama, the islands are a haven, a nest which is soft and warm and secure from the harshness and bitterness of life, a haven where native savages dance naked and unshamed and where love is fearless and uncomplicated.

For Levinia the islands are a place where she can find men to love in the image of her father; a place "where love can never be a sin," a place freed from men's "dirty dream of love." For Orin they are a projection of his mother. He says to her in describing his dream:

There was no one there but you and me. And yet  
I never saw you, that's the funny part. I only  
felt you all around me. The breaking of the waves  
was your voice. The sky was the same color as  
your eyes. The warm sand was like your skin. The  
whole island was you. A strange notion, wasn't  
it? But you needn't be provoked at being an island  
because this was the most beautiful island in the  
world—as beautiful as you, Mother!

(*"The Hunted,"* II, p. 776.)

Even the bitter, straight-laced judge and brigadier-general, Ezra Hannon, has his dream of an island. After the war, death has become rather meaningless to him, and life for the first time seems worthy of

attention. Perhaps these hide-bound rules of moral conduct that he has followed so religiously have erected the wall between him and his wife that has made their marriage so unfortunate.

I've been thinking of what we could do to get back to each other. I've a notion if we'd leave the children and go off on a voyage together—to the other side of the world—find some island where we could be alone a while. You'll find I have changed, Christine, I'm sick of death! I want life! Maybe you could love me now! I've got to make you love me!

("Homecoming," III, p. 740.)

And for the romantic Brant the Blessed Isles were a place to take his love where she might eat of the lotus fruit while the naked girls danced in the moonlight. However, towards the end of the play, after the stark tragedy has set in, these islands symbolize something else. With a bitter, hopeless yearning, he says to Christine:

Aye—the Blessed Isles—Maybe we can still find happiness and forget! I can see them now—so close—and a million miles away! The warm earth in the moonlight, the trade winds rustling the coco-palms, the surf on the barrier reef singing a croon in your ears like a lullaby! Aye! There's peace, and forgetfulness for us there—if we can ever find those islands now!

("The Hunted," III, p. 798.)

Each of these morbid, wretched souls has a secret dream, then, of savage islands where the New England inhibitions of sex crumble under the force of lawless passion. And this dream, whether it be a waking one or not, is a natural result of repression. Professor McDougall sums up Freud's theory in the following paragraph (Outline of Abnormal Psychology, p. 137):

Freud's theory maintains that all adult dreams, with the exception of a few which directly express urgent bodily needs, such as hunger and thirst, are disguised expressions of repressed wishes, and that the repressed wishes so expressed in all cases are, or have their main motive root in, sexual tendencies or fixations formed in infancy and later

repressed under the influence of social and moral pressure coming from the environment.

How well this explains the secret longings of O'Neill's characters is obvious enough.

Psychoanalytical undercurrents are heavy in each character that plays a part in this Orestean tragedy translated into the terms of mid-nineteenth century New England.

Lavinia, the Electra of the drama, is bitterly in love with her father, hating as bitterly her mother who holds the place that she would fill. How well Christine understands her daughter is shown when she says to her accusingly:

I know you Winnie! I've watched you ever since you were little, trying to do exactly what you're doing now! You've tried to become the wife of your father and the mother of Orin! You've always schemed to steal my place!

In Winnie's passionate denial one finds her acknowledgment. Wildly she cries,

No! It's you who have stolen all love from me since the time I was born!

("Homescoming," II, p. 716.)

These quotations might well have been taken from case studies with which Freud illustrates his lectures on psychoanalysis. In fact, speaking of a girl who has entered the Oedipus-complex, he says (Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, p. 176), "The hostility against her mother, which did not require to be newly created, now receives a great reinforcement, for her mother becomes a rival, who gets everything from her father that she herself wants."

Nothing could be more illustrative of the girl's erotic love for her father nor of her intense jealousy of her mother than the agony she endures when her parents, after a passionate embrace on the part of the father, go off to their bedroom. Looking up to their lighted window,

with an anguish of jealous hatred, she cries:

I hate you. You steal even Father's love from me again! You stole all love from me when I was born! Oh, Mother! Why have you done this to me? What harm had I done you? (Then looking up at the window again—with passionate disgust) Father, how can you love that shameless harlot! (Then frenziedly) I can't bear it!

("Homecoming," III, p. 741.)

This hatred of her mother began when she was a small child. Freud says (Introductory Lectures, pp. 167-168) that one reason why a child, particularly a girl, wishes to free itself from the pre-Oedipal attachment to the mother is that it feels that it has been dethroned, robbed, and had its rights invaded; and so it directs a feeling of jealous hatred against its little brother, who has taken the mother's affection from it, and develops resentment against its faithless mother. All this explains clearly enough Vinnie's jealousy of Oris and in part her hatred of her mother; there is still another reason, however, why she hates her mother. This has little to do with Freud's early inference that the Oedipus complex depended upon some specific and selective instinct; it proves that the child's feeling towards the parent is due partly to the response induced, encouraged, and directed by the attitude of the environment (the parent). Freud gave little attention to this point until after 1930 (Kerninger, The Human Mind, p. 309). The following quotation shows that Christine is in part to blame for her daughter's complex:

LAVINIA. So I was born of your disgust! I've always guessed that, Mother—ever since I was little—when I used to come to you—with love—but you would always push me away! I've felt it ever since I can remember—your disgust! Oh, I hate you! It's only right that I should hate you!

CHRISTINE. I tried to love you. I told myself it wasn't human not to love my own child, born of my body. But I never could make myself feel you were born of my body but his! You were always my wedding

night to me—and my honeymoon!

LAVINIA. Stop saying that! How can you be so—!  
 (Then suddenly with a strange jealous bitterness)  
 You've loved Orin! Why didn't you hate him, too?  
 ("Homescoming," II, 714.)

In the words of Freud, one concludes from this last speech that "the child forced into second place by the birth of a little brother or sister, and practically isolated from his mother, is loathe to forgive her for this; feelings which we would call extreme bitterness in an adult are aroused in him and often become the basis of a lasting estrangement" (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 289).

The child's love was then transferred to the father. This development of the Oedipus-complex (or the Electra-complex—its feminine equivalent) is in accordance with the theory of the psychoanalysts. However, at this stage there occurred a tie-up of the action, a fixation. Lavinia, like many others, is unable to detach herself from the love bonds that held her to her father; thus she is unable to ever love anyone else. She remains fixated on her father, and since she can not sufficiently repress her erotic love, she becomes a victim of an unwholesome mental conflict. Realizing her inability to love anyone so different from her father as is Peter, she says to him,

I don't know anything about love! I don't want  
 to know anything! I hate love!

Then slowly and more calmly,

I can't marry you, Peter. I've got to stay home.  
 Father needs me.

("Homescoming," I, p. 636.)

Since Lavinia, of course, found little satisfaction in her Electra-complex, she identified herself with her father. Freud says (New Introductory Lectures, p. 178) that this inevitable disappointment which is experienced from the father drives women into a regression to their

early masculinity complex, a masculinity complex that was first established as a compensation to offset the feeling of inferiority that arose when the little brother was loved by the mother more deeply than was the girl. Whether or not such a theory is of scientific soundness is of no concern; the point of interest is that Lavinia does assume this masculine complex, or this identification with her father. At the beginning of the play O'Neill gives the following description of the girl:

Tall like her mother, her body is thin, flat-breasted and angular, and its unattractiveness is accentuated by her plain black dress. Her movements are stiff and she carries herself with a wooden, square-shouldered, military bearing. She has a flat, dry voice and a habit of snapping out her words like an officer giving orders. But in spite of these dissimilarities, one is immediately struck by her facial resemblance to her mother. She has the same peculiar shade of copper-gold hair, the same pallor and dark violet-blue eyes, the black eyebrows meeting in a straight line above her nose, the same sensual mouth, the same heavy jaw.

("Homecoming," I, p. 622.)

Again and again the stiff, military bearing of her body and the curt, crisp tone of her voice are emphasized.

This masculine quality in the girl, together with her twisted love for her father, makes her ever the leader in the enactment of the tragedy that is about to take place. Driven by passion and jealousy, she has the grandeur of a remorseless Medea. She unearths the two secrets of her mother—her love for Adam and her crime regarding the murder of her husband. The leader still, she awakens her brother's wild jealousy and urges him to murder his rival in his mother's affections. Carried on by her jealous hatred, the girl aids in killing the man whom she unconsciously loved and in goading her mother to suicide. Now, freed from the object of her jealousy and from the torturing love

for her father, she believes she can live. To save Orin from insanity, she takes him to the South Sea Islands.

Here, on this island of her dreams, the kiss of a savage chieftain opens her eyes to what she has been missing. On their return, Lavinia determines to marry Peter. A curious change has taken place in her. The masculinity derived from her father has given way to a definite femininity. In describing her now, O'Neill says,

Her body, formerly so thin and undeveloped, has filled out. Her movements have lost their square-shouldered stiffness. She now bears a striking resemblance to her mother in every respect, even to being dressed in the green her mother had affected.

("The Haunted," I, p. 823.)

This change is wholly in keeping with the Freudian psychology of women. The famous Viennese psychologist in his New Introductory Lectures (p. 179) says: "In many women we actually find a repeated alternation of periods in which either masculinity or femininity has obtained the upper hand. What we call 'the enigma of woman' is probably based in part upon these signs of bi-sexuality in female life."

But Orin stands in the way of her marrying Peter. He loves her with an incestuous love, and what she fears even more is that, still chained to his mother, he will confess everything. Since there is no other way to preserve her happiness, she goads Orin to suicide. Now Lavinia is truly free—free to marry Peter, free to let the wrath of love that she inherited from her mother run through her chilled body, free to find safety at last in Peter's arms and call him—Adam!

Take me in this house of the dead and love me!  
Our love will drive the dead away! It will shame  
them back into death. Want me! Take me, Adam!

Brought back with a start by this name escaping her, she is bewildered and laughs hysterically,



Adam? Why did I call you Adam?

("The Haunted," IV, p. 365.)

Had Lavinia known something about the mechanism of tongue slips, she would not have asked the question. These tongue slips, declares Freud, are the result of suppression. "... the suppressed tendency obtains expression against the speaker's will, in that it changes the expression of the intention which he permits, mixes itself with it or actually puts itself in its place" (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 46).

If the reason for the Freudian lapsus linguae is not known to Lavinia, she at least realizes with a horrified intensity her unconscious love for Adam Brant who looked so much like her father, and realizes also one of the motives which lay behind the bounding of her mother.

That Adam Brant looked strikingly like Ezra Mannon is a point that O'Neill emphasizes again and again. Seth, the gardener, first reminds Winnie of the resemblance. Her halting reply suggests so much, hints so openly at what lies just beyond her consciousness:

Father? No! It can't be! (Then as if conviction were forcing itself on her in spite of herself) Yes! He does—something about his face—that must be why I've had the strange feeling I've known him before—why I've felt—(Then tensely as if she were about to break down) Oh! I won't believe it! You must be mistaken, Seth! That would be too—!

("Homecoming," I, p. 701.)

At last Lavinia becomes conscious of her guilty love which has directed her even in her love for Adam. "To one remaining in the Oedipus-complex, the object-choice is made according to the father-type" (New Introductory Lectures, p. 181). To Peter she says,

I can't marry you, Peter. You mustn't ever see me again ... The dead are too strong!

("The Haunted," IV, p. 365.)

In this last act of the tragedy, Lavinia has again identified

herself with her father in appearance. She appears flat-chested and the Hammon mask-comblance of her face seems intensified. Her features are congealed in a stony, emotionless expression, the lips, drawn taut, are set in a grim line. In the mourning that becomes her, she sets her back on love and goes into the house of the Mannons to live until they shall be pleased to let her lie with them. Only so can she expiate the guilt within her.

\* \* \* \*

The Orestes of the tragedy is, of course, Orin, and like his Greek predecessor he is unwholesomely in love with his mother. In him the Oedipus-complex enlarges and coarsens the myth. Here the hatred of the father and the death-wish with regard to him are no longer timidly suggested, and the affection for the mother recognizes the goal of possessing her for a wife. His reaction to this complex made of him a Hamlet who does not delay his revenge on the unfortunate lover.

When Orin returns from the war and learns of his father's death, there is no trace of sorrow in his voice when he speaks those words that imply so much relief at the fulfillment of the unconscious death-wish:

I simply can't realize he's dead yet. I suppose I'd come to expect he would live forever. (A trace of resentment has crept into his voice) Or, at least outlive me.

("The Hunted," I, p. 780.)

Now that death has rid him of his rival, he dreams of going to live with his mother on a South Sea Island. When she strokes his hair, an expression of bliss comes over his face; he believes that everything Vinnie has told him is a lie.

ORIN. And I'll never leave you again now. I don't want Hazel or anyone. (With a tender grin)

You're my only girl!

CHRISTINE. You're a big man now, aren't you? I can't believe it. It seems only yesterday when I used to find you in your nightshirt hiding in the hall upstairs on the chance that I'd come up and you'd get one more good-night kiss! Do you remember?

ORIN. You bet I remember! And what a row there was when Father caught me! And do you remember how you used to let me brush your hair and how I loved to? He hated me doing that, too. You've still got the same beautiful hair, Mother. That hasn't changed. Oh, Mother, it's going to be wonderful from now on! We'll get Winnie to marry Peter and there will be just you and I!

("The Hunted," I, p. 777.)

Here is a literary illustration of Freud's statement that "the son, even as a small child, begins to develop an especial tenderness for his mother, whom he considers as his own property, and feels his father to be a rival who puts into question his individual possession" (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 174).

As in the case of his sister, Orin has remained in the Oedipus-complex, though with him his unnatural love seems a more conscious process. When Winnie tells him that his mother has taken Adam for lover, he is driven wild with jealousy. It is only through the most skillful manipulations that Christine can break down his suspicions and get him to avow:

... No matter what you ever did, I love you better than anything in the world and—

After a passionate embrace from his mother,

Mother! (Then seizing her by the shoulders and staring into her eyes with somber intensity) I could forgive anything—anything!—in my Mother—except that other—that about Brant!

CHRISTINE. I swear to you—!

ORIN. If I thought that damned—I (With savage vengeance) By God. I'd show you then I hadn't been taught to kill for nothing!

("The Hunted," I, p. 775.)

Surely his guilty love for his mother knows no suppression. When Winnie, digging under his skin, says,

I heard her telling him, "I love you, Adam."  
She was kissing him!

he grabs her by the shoulder and shakes her, forcing her to her knees--  
frenziedly,

Damn you! Tell me you're lying or--!

And when she says that his mother went to Adam's room to give herself  
to him, his anguish and insane jealousy know no bounds:

You lie, damn you! ... Now you've got to prove  
it or else--!

("The Hunted," III, p. 785.)

But Winnie does prove it, and the boy kills his mother's lover  
and gloats over his body. As he looks at the dead man, he reflects,

By God, he does look like Father! ... This is  
like my dream. I've killed him before--over and  
over.

("The Hunted," IV, p. 808.)

It is not Adam, who was unknown to him until recently, that Orin has  
killed "over and over"; it is his father. Nor is this death-wish  
unnatural for one whose life is portrayed in accordance with Freudian  
psychology. Of the dream, Freud says, "As often as someone has been  
in our way in life--and how often must this happen in the complicated  
relationships of life--the dream is ready to do away with him, be he  
father, mother, brother, sister, spouse etc." (Introduction to Psycho-  
analysis, p. 171).

The dream wherein the death-wish is fulfilled naturally implies  
that another dream occupied the sleeping hours of Orin. To his mother  
he says, "I used to have the most wonderful dreams about you." And to  
Hazel he confesses, "I used to hear you singing--down there [on the  
battle-field]. It made me feel life might still be alive somewhere--

that, and my dreams of Mother, and the memory of Vinnie bossing me around like a drill sergeant." Mannon, as he tells his wife of the time Orin was unconscious in the war hospital, says, "Acted as if he were a little boy again. Seemed to think you were with him. That is, he kept talking to 'Mother.'" The real motive force of Orin's dreams was his love for his mother. With this love his dream-thoughts concerned themselves, weaving either dreams where the repressed impulse towards his mother was satisfied and he imagined himself alone with her on an island described for him in Typee, or dreams where the impulse towards his father, his rival, was gratified in the fulfillment of the death-wish. In either case the dream-thoughts are wish-fulfillments. They represent "the psychic life during sleep" (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 67). Since there has been so much stress in the drama on Orin's relations with his mother while he was yet a child, and since reference is made in his dreams to this same relationship, evidence seems to prove that O'Neill is in sympathy with Freud's idea that "all the imperishable and unrealisable desires which provide the energy for the formation of dreams throughout one's whole life are bound up with these same childish experiences, and one can well trust to their ability with their powerful upward thrust to force even material of a painful nature to the surface" (New Introductory Lectures, p. 44). The material of a painful nature in Orin's dreams must have concerned "the rows" there were when his father caught him kissing his mother unduly. These disappointments the dream-work turned into fulfillment, either by removing the father or by permitting unrestrained expression of his love.

When Christine hears of the fate of her lover, she goes, meaning to kill herself. And now Orin, horrified, suffers as much from anguish over her death as he did from the jealousy caused by her faithlessness.

A year passes—a year spent on the South Sea Islands where Lavinia vainly tries to make him forget. But on the return Orin is still tormented. The Greek furies that haunt him consist not only of an active madness of blood-guilt for the death of his mother but of still another factor. To Vinnie he has transferred the fixation he had for his mother. She who "had tried to become the wife of her father and the mother of Orin" has now become a recognizable likeness of her mother; this is the basis for the incestuous passion that Orin now holds for his sister. In identifying herself with her mother, Vinnie chose as model the mother represented in her pre-oedipal phase of development—that is, the mother for whom she had a tender attachment—before all the hatred and jealousy that came with the Oedipus-complex was awakened in her. Now Freud declares that it is this particular identification with the mother that acquires for the woman that attractiveness for the man which kindles his oedipal attachment to his mother (New Introductory Lectures, p. 125). Since Orin has never out-grown his Oedipus-complex, since the chain that bound him to his mother is still intact even though she is dead, it is not surprising, in the light of Freudian psychology, that he now openly loves the sister who is the living embodiment of the mother. The same jealous hatred that he felt for Adam he now feels for Peter. As he and Hazel come upon Vinnie and Peter kissing each other, O'Neill says that Orin "starts as if he were struck. He glares at them with jealous rage and clenches his fists as if he were going to attack them." Threateningly he says,

So that's it! By God—!

("The Haunted," I, p. 335.)

Again insane jealousy appears when the half-crazed man believes his sister guilty of relations with a South Sea Islander. His face grown livid, with a hoarse cry of fury he grabs her by the throat:

You—you where! I'll kill you!

Then breaking down and becoming weak and pitiful, he adds,

No! You're lying about him, aren't you?  
For God's sake tell me you're lying, Vinnie!  
(*"The Haunted," I, p. 842.*)

Finally he admits,

I love you now with all the guilt in me—the  
guilt we share! Perhaps I love you too much,  
Vinnie!

And when she cries out in horror, he says, calculating,

How else can I be sure you won't leave me?  
You would never dare leave me—then! You  
would feel as guilty then as I do! You would  
be as damned as I am!  
(*"The Haunted," III, p. 853.*)

Now Vinnie sees clearly that Orin stands between her and happiness. He sees the unconscious look of murder in her eyes. Their relationship of love and hatred becomes intolerable. And when she suggests that he would kill himself were he not a coward, Orin, crushed by the disapproval of one whom he loves so deeply and so guiltily, goes to shoot himself—as Vinnie intends that he should.

Orin had become keenly conscious of the feeling of guilt within him. As if by self-analysis he had recognized in himself the Oedipus complex and unable to destroy the criminal purposes within him, he took his own life. To Vinnie he said:

Yes! That would be justice—now you are Mother!  
She is speaking now through you! Yes! It's the  
way to peace—to find her again—my lost island—  
Death is an Island of Peace, too—Mother will be  
waiting for me there—Mother! Do you know what  
I'll do then? I'll get on my knees and ask your  
forgiveness—and say—I'll say, I'm glad you  
found love, Mother! I'll wish you happiness—you  
and Adam! You've heard me! You're here in the  
house now! You're calling me! You're waiting to  
take me home.

(*"The Haunted," III, p. 855.*)

Having confessed openly his sin, Orin felt his guilt strongly enough to lead himself to punishment, particularly when the way was pointed out so clearly by one who represented his mother. This is a psychological truth. Freud writes that "even if man has relegated his evil impulses to the unconscious, and would tell himself that he is no longer answerable for them, he will still be compelled to experience this responsibility as a feeling of guilt which he can not trace to its source" (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 237).

\* \* \* \*

Christine, a woman by marriage only, did not share this feeling of guilt. She was a pathetic figure who cried from her soul, "I am not guilty!" Hating her husband, she centered all her affection on her son, and when he was taken from her she fell in love with a man who resembled Orin. Yet, had Christine been given to self-analysis, she would have seen her love for her son as a twisted, distorted image of wholesome mother love, and she might have acknowledged the feeling of guilt that she refused to share with her children. One is told in the Introduction to Psychoanalysis (p. 174) that "children frequently react to the Oedipus-idea through stimulation by the parents, who in the placing of their affection are often led by sex-differences, so that the father prefers the daughter, the mother the son; or again where the marital affection has cooled, and this love is substituted for the outworn love." Christine emphasizes the latter reason when she tells Vinnie that she hates both her husband and her daughter, who is the child of her disgust, but loves Orin.

Because by then I had forced myself to become  
resigned in order to live! And most of the time  
I was carrying him, your father was with the army



in Mexico. I had forgotten him. And when Orin was born he seemed my child, only mine, and I loved him for that!

("Homecoming," II, p. 114.)

When Orin was an adolescent boy and with proper direction might have become a normal man, outgrowing his Oedipus-complex, Christine again interfered. Her possessiveness only augmented the growing fixation. Her son's interest in girls was distasteful to her. Recalling his early interest in Hazel, Orin reminds his mother,

You never used to think much of her. You didn't want me going around with her.

("The Hunted," II, p. 770.)

That her love for her son was of a twisted nature is attested by her statement that Ezra was always jealous of his son.

He hated you because he knew I loved you better than anything in the world!

("The Hunted," II, p. 772.)

It was this jealousy that prompted Ezra to taunt Orin into joining the army. But Ezra's revenge was miscalculated. Christine thereby shifts the blame of her faithlessness from her own shoulders. To Vinnie she says,

Well, I hope you realize I never would have fallen in love with Adam if I'd had Orin with me. When he had gone there was nothing left—but hate and a desire for revenge—and a longing for love!

("Homecoming," II, p. 715.)

To Adam, then, Christine transferred her incestuous love for her son. In a sense her love still smacks of the forbidden, for Adam so resembles Orin in appearance. As O'Neill insisted on the resemblance between Ezra and Adam, he also insists on the likeness of Adam and Orin. Christine believes Vinnie first suspected Adam's blood-relationship because he looks so much like Orin. And when Adam remarks that it would be queer if she fell in love with him because he recalled Ezra Mannon to her, she immediately replies,

He, no, I tell you! It was Orin you made me think of! It was Orin!

("Homescoming," II, p. 720.)

When Adam is dead, even Orin, as he grimly smiles over the man he has killed, says,

He looks like me, too! Maybe I've committed suicide.

("The Busted," IV, p. 805.)

She who was not a Mannon was yet infected with the same virus, and like the rest, since she had only the family to live with, permitted her emotions to become warped and crooked. Unlike the rest, however, there came a time when her desires proved stronger than her inhibitions, when she overthrew the conventions that the others guarded so closely. But the result was the same tragic outcome—oddly enough it was Christine who packed the most skeletons in the already bursting closets.

\* \* \* \*

Ezra Mannon, the head of the house, is not the least tragic of those that suffer there. Hard man that he is, embodiment of Puritanical righteousness, he is yet like a child crying in the shadows for some way to break down the barriers that cut him off from his wife and from his fellowmen. Ezra better than any other Mannon shows that quality of careful repression that is so characteristic of their Puritan make-up. His very voice, as O'Neill describes it, has a hollow repressed quality as if he were continually withholding emotion from it.

But during the war Ezra's eyes were opened to the fact that he had missed life:

It was seeing death all the time in this war got me to thinking these things. Death was so common,

it didn't mean anything. That freed me to think of life. Queer, isn't it? Death made me think of life. Before that life had only made me think of death.

("Homecoming," III, p. 738.)

Here lay his trouble. Bound by inhibitions, he appeared a statue whose coldness killed his young wife's love. And now seeing his fault, he confides to Christine that,

Something queer in me keeps me mum about the things I'd like most to say--keeps me hiding the things I'd like most to show. Something keeps me sitting numb in my own heart--like a statue of a dead man in a town square.

("Homecoming," III, p. 740.)

And because of these fatal inhibitions his life was made tragic enough:

When I came back [from the Mexican War] you had turned to your new baby, Orin. I was hardly alive for you any more. I saw that. I tried not to hate Orin. I turned to Vinnie, but a daughter's not a wife. Then I made up my mind I'd do my work in the world and leave you alone in your life and not care. That's why the shipping wasn't enough--why I became a judge and a mayor and such vain truck, and why folks in town looked at me as so able! Ha! Able for what? Not for what I wanted most in life! Not for your love! No! Able only to keep my mind from thinking of what I'd lost!

("Homecoming," III, p. 759.)

A pitiful story of the vain efforts to repress the desires that were so natural and necessary in his life, an excellent example of the futility of sublimation in bringing about a satisfying solution, and an admirable illustration of the tragedy brought about by sexual maladjustment in the Puritan soul.

But his narration does not contain the whole story of his life. Had Ezra been a student of Freud, he would have looked into his childhood experiences for an explanation of his adult behavior. O'Neill, Freudian that he proves himself to be in this drama, does not lose sight of that important period in an individual's life. It is revealed that Abe Mannon, Ezra's father, destroyed his house and built a new one be-

cause his brother David ran away with Marie Brantôme, their servant girl, whom Abe also loved. But according to Seth, the gardener, Abe and David were not the only ones in the family who had been attracted to Marie. Ezra also loved her. To Vinnie, Seth says:

He was only a boy then, but he was crazy about her, too, like a youngster would be. His mother was stern with him, while Marie, she made a fuss over him and petted him.

LAVINIA. Father, too!

SETH. Ayah—but he hated her worse than an anyone when it got found out she was his uncle David's fancy woman.

("Homecoming," III, pp. 778-779.)

Clearly enough Marie became identified in the little boy's mind with his mother, and on her he lavished his awakening libidinous love which, had his own mother been less stern, would rightfully have been bestowed on her. Freud says (Collected Papers, Vol. II, p. 183) that "none of these incestuous loves can avoid the fate of repression. They may succumb to it on the occasion of some discoverable external event which leads to disillusionment." This is what happened in Ezra's case. David fell in love with Marie and she ran off with him. Such faithlessness could only be followed by hate.

But in spite of this hatred, when Ezra married, the influence of his early love determined the type of woman that he chose for wife. Concerning the choice of an object Freud points out the choice can proceed according to two different types—either according to the narcissistic type, which puts a very similar personality in the place of the personal ego, or according to the dependent type, which chooses those persons who have become valuable by satisfying needs of life" (Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 368). Marie had made "a fuss over him and petted him" and thereby determined for him what his future wife should be. O'Neill makes it very clear that Christina looked like

Marie. In describing Christine he says:

She has a fine, voluptuous figure and she moves with a flowing animal grace. She wears a green satin dress, smartly cut and expensive, which brings out the peculiar color of her thick curly hair, partly a copper brown, partly a bronze gold, each shade distinct and yet blending with the other. ... [Her eyes are] of a dark, violet blue. ("Homecoming," I, p. 691.)

And of Marie Seth says:

Marie? She was always laughin' and singin'—frisky and full of life—with something free and wild about her like an animal. Party she was, too! ... Hair just the color of your Maw's and yours she had. ("Homecoming," III, p. 728.)

Earlier in the play Brant speaks of this strange similarity of the three women in his talk with Lavinia:

You're so like your mother in some ways. Your face is the dead image of hers. And look at your hair. You won't meet hair like yours and hers again in a month of Sundays. I only know of one other woman who had it. You'll think it strange when I tell you. It was my Mother. ("Homecoming," I, p. 704.)

It was the fatal likeness of the Hannon women to Marie Brantôme that determined the stark tragedy of the family. Marie was responsible for two men, Ezra and Adam, loving Christine, and oddly enough she represented the mother to both of them.

Adam's love for Christine was free of repression, for he was not bound by the New England Puritan code, and Christine loved him with all the passion she might have shown her husband had he not so assiduously worn the mask even in her presence.

It is rather difficult to explain this great degree of repression that characterized Ezra in relation to his wife. It may be the result of a number of factors. There was the moral code of the Puritan which frowned down on passion; there was the love-hate relationship with Marie

that carried over to the wife chosen after her likeness; and there was also an unconscious feeling of guilt that controlled his self-expression. It has already been pointed out that Marie took the place of the mother for Ezra, that in his parent-complex stage of development she was the object of his libidinous impulses. It also follows, then, that after he has repressed these impulses, a sense of guilt appears. Of this inevitable feeling of guilt Freud says (Collected Papers, Vol. II, p. 183) that "this is also of unknown origin, but there is no doubt whatever that it is connected with the incestuous wishes, and that it is justified by the persistence of these wishes in the unconscious." In other words, Christine suggests something Ezra would repress.

There came a day when Ezra squarely faced the problem of his unhappy relation with his wife and indulged in a bit of psychoanalysis, but it was then too late. Christine could not answer the cry, "I want life! Maybe you could love me now!" Instead, she poisoned him that her starved impulses might be satisfied by a more romantic lover, the half-Mannor Adam.

The son, who knew nothing of the struggle going on in the man's tormented soul, who hated him as a rival, now looks dispassionately on his dead body, and with a strange friendly mockery says:

Who are you? Another corpse! You and I have seen fields and hillsides sown with them—and they meant nothing!—nothing but a dirty joke life plays on life! Death sits so naturally on you! Death becomes the Mannors! You were always like a statue of an eminent dead man—sitting on a chair in the park or straddling a horse in a town square—looking over the head of life without a sign of recognition—cutting it dead for the impropriety of living! You never cared to know me in life—but I really think we might be friends now that you are dead!

("The Hunted," III, pp. 779-780.)

Joseph Jastrow in The House that Freud Built (p. 120) has this to say about Mourning Becomes Electra:

... From this the transition is easy, once the Freudian clues are accepted, to develop fictitious characters—in novels and dramas notably—upon the Freudian model of motivation. A conspicuous instance is O'Neill's play: Mourning Becomes Electra, in which the Oedipus situations are reproduced in modern setting, serving as the source of the personal and situational conflicts with which the play deals. By such complete acceptance the author becomes a Freudian dramatist.

With what detail O'Neill has drawn his characters on the Freudian pattern has just been seen.

**AH, WILDERNESS!**

The comedy Ah, Wilderness! is a strange interlude in the work of a man whose medium is tragedy. It is true that the comic spirit often appears in O'Neill, but its purpose, other than in this one play, is to heighten the tragic atmosphere. It is the bitter, ironic kind of humor found in the graveyard scene of Hamlet. In Ah, Wilderness! O'Neill shows himself capable of a gentle, wholesome humor, kindly satirical in nature. For those who study O'Neill for the purpose of tracing his poetic development, this play is of great importance; but it does not add greatly to his reputation as a profound psychologist, which is the theme of this dissertation. A psychologist concerns himself chiefly with the complex conflicts that grow out of problems which for a time seem overwhelming to the individual or which in the end make of him an abnormal human being at the mercy of forces over which he has no control. In Ah, Wilderness! there are no such problems; here one meets ordinary, normal men and women whose problems are for the moment only a trifle disturbing and are solved or not solved in the natural course of events. Whether a solution is found or not really does not matter, for the situations are unimportant and without influence on the characters.

However, Richard, the main character of the play, is a typical O'Neill creation in one respect. He is described as possessing "something of extreme sensitiveness . . . a restless, apprehensive, defiant, shy, dreamy, self-conscious intelligence." Under certain environmental conditions, he might easily become a tragic figure, such as Robert or



Dion or Michael. But here in the setting of a small Connecticut town, the boy's characteristics lead no further than to a gentle, romantic rebellion which becomes very amusing and which is easily solved by a sympathetic understanding between father and son.

Richard stands in strange contrast to another boy, to Reuben in Dynamos. The former is a product of a generation back whose atmosphere was that of The Rubaiyat, and whose belief includes a spiritual faith that assured each man his place in the sun; the latter, on the other hand, belongs to the present day whose interpreters are Hardy, Dreiser, and O'Neill, and whose insecurity has destroyed idealism and set up a realistic materialism that laughs in scorn at the philosophy of an earlier day. Richard goes through adolescence in the manner of a normal youth, while Reuben is beset by fixations and regressions growing out of his complex nature and the unsympathetic environment that surrounds him.

If Ah, Wilderness! is related to any of the O'Neill plays, it is in The Straw where this kinship is found. Strangely enough, it is in this play, written thirteen years before, that one finds a parody on The Rubaiyat which supplies the title to Ah, Wilderness! However, the affinity of the two plays lies in their simple realism and in the spirit of affirmation which characterizes both. In these plays there are no divided personalities, no masks hiding inner torture, no dissociation indicative of conflict too great for the conscious self to withstand, no suppressions resulting in fixations that mark the sufferer as pathetically abnormal; instead there is tender affection, the spirit of sacrifice, and a certain faith in humanity.

## XXIII

### DAYS WITHOUT END

Days Without End has for its theme a great emotional conflict.

But this statement might well be made of all of O'Neill's major plays, for O'Neill believes that the modern drama, if it is to be truly representative of its age, must deal with such inner conflicts. To portray the emotional struggle in The Great God Brown, the dramatist used masks. O'Neill was as sincere a believer in the value of this new technique as he was an ardent advocate of an inner conflict to assure the significance of a play. He made the following statement concerning this attitude:

I hold more and more surely to the conviction that the use of masks will be discovered eventually to be the freest solution of the modern dramatist's problem as to how—with the greatest possible dramatic clarity and economy of means—he can express those profound hidden conflicts of the mind which the probings of psychology continue to disclose to us. He must find some method to present this inner drama in his work, or confess himself incapable of portraying one of the most characteristic preoccupations and uniquely significant, spiritual impulses of his time. (The American Spectator, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 3.)

In Days Without End, however, another technique has been used for treating the modern psychological problem. In place of the mask which in the earlier play indicates the outer rather than the inner character of the man, one now finds two characters, John representing the inner John Loving, and Loving representing the man John Loving strives to be. The conflict that the play dramatizes is a struggle between John Loving's belief in God and his belief in himself.

O'Neill calls his play A Modern Miracle Play; it is a modern psychological interpretation of the old medieval theme found in the Faust legend—that of a man giving his soul to the devil. That this theme attracted O'Neill is proved by the following passage taken from The American Spectator quoted above:

Consider Goethe's Faust, which, psychologically speaking, should be the closest to us of all the Classics. In producing this play, I would have Mephistopheles wear the Mephistophelian mask of the face of Faust. For is not the whole of Goethe's truth for our time just that Mephistopheles and Faust are one and the same—are Faust?

The devil in Man, in John, is, then, what Loving represents. In the phraseology of the psychologist, one again finds in John Loving an interesting case of disintegrated personality. It has been pointed out before that disintegration implies two goals towards which the personality is striving—goals which are incompatible, each of which evokes certain sentiments that are congenial to it. A deep emotional conflict thus arises. If the character has a high degree of stability, the strain may be borne. There are, indeed, few men who attain harmonious integration of character. In the character of Lazarus, O'Neill has given a magnificent literary example of a man whose character has been formed from a well-balanced disposition under the influence of unquestioned ideals and of a definite supreme goal or master purpose. Most of the characters created by the dramatist are too human to have attained such perfect wholeness. The character of John Loving, together with that of a few others, such as Dion and Brown, is unique in that it illustrates conflict without repression. In such characters as Nina, Hanson, Ella, and Eben, the conflicts become more sinister because they are, in part at least, subconscious. Moral conflict within the human soul has, of course, been familiar through long ages; but, as Professor

McDougall points out (Outline of Abnormal Psychology, p. 21), it was Freud who showed that conflicts are not always fought out to a decisive issue, that certain urges to some special goal are apt to be suppressed or repressed and thus to live on subterraneously, seeking expression in indirect ways. How well O'Neill understands this principle of Freudian psychology has been shown time and again in the analysis of such plays as Strange Interlude, Mourning Becomes Electra, All God's Chillun Got Wings, and Desire Under the Elms.

In Days Without End, O'Neill pictures a struggle where the conflicting goals or motives are recognized and openly acknowledged by the victim. If John Loving is to again become integrated, there must be involved a choice between two goals—belief in God or belief in himself—goals towards both of which he is impelled by motives equally strong, or nearly so; and where appeal to his principles, ideals, or standards furnishes no additional motive to determine the issue, to throw victory decidedly to one side or the other.

John's faith in God was destroyed when his parents died. His God was "One of Infinite Love—not a stern, self-righteous Being Who condemned sinners to torment, but a very human, lovable God Who became man for love of men and gave His life that they might be saved from themselves." Now when John was left alone without love, grief stricken, he "cursed his God and denied Him, and, in revenge, promised his soul to the Devil."

In his search for truth, for some meaning in life, he pursued endless issues in the fields of economics and religion. At different times in his life he was an atheist, a socialist, an anarchist, a Nietzschean, a bolshevist, a Marxian, a follower of "the defunct mysticism of the East," of Lao Tze, of Buddha, of Pythagorus, and of

Anti-Christ. But each of these in turn provided a chimera; truth could be where be found.

Finally he again came upon love, this time the love of a woman. At this point the character of John Loving becomes more disintegrated. After his denial of God, there was but one goal, belief in himself which implied the destruction of his belief in God. So far the rôle of Mephistopheles has been an easy one; John was all too willing to follow Loving in the pursuit of temporal values. But now with John's passionate love for Elsa, his wife, the first goal, belief in God, again strives for recognition; God is Love. The Tempter must destroy this newborn faith in love. He succeeds in making John commit adultery, a sin against that love. He next tries to make John desire his wife's death, for, if he brings this about, John will despise himself and long for his own death, thus comprehending at last that "there is no truth for man, that human life is unimportant and meaningless," that there is no God, "that death is final release, the warm, dark peace of annihilation."

So where does the conflict in John Loving's tortured soul become so acute as at the hour when his wife actually seems to be dying.

LOVING. (Smilingly) ... how can you desire to go on—  
with all that was Elsa rotting in her grave behind  
you!

JOHN. (Tortured) No! I can't! I'll kill myself!

LOVING. (Triumphantly) Ah! At last you accept the true  
end! At last you see the empty posing of your old  
ideal about Man's duty to go on for life's sake,  
your meaningless gesture of braving fate—a childish  
nose-thumbing at Nothingness at which Something  
laughs with a weary scorn! (He gives a low, scorn-  
ful laugh) Shorn of your boastful words, all it  
means is to go on like an animal in dumb obedience  
to the law of the blind stupidity of life that it  
must live at all costs! But where will you go—  
except to death? And why should you wait for an

and you know when it is in your power to grasp that end—now!

The dying Elsa means frightenedly,

No, John—no! —please, John!

But the Tempter goes on,

Surely you cannot be afraid of death. Death is not the dying. Dying is life, its last revenge upon itself. But death is what the dead know, the warm, dark womb of Nothingness—the Dream in which you and Elsa may sleep as one forever, beyond fear of separation!

JOHN. (Longingly) Elsa and I—forever beyond fear!

LOVING. Dust within dust to sleep!

JOHN. (Mechanically) Dust within dust.  
(Then frightenedly questioning) Dust? Fool!  
Can dust love the dust? No! (Desperately)  
O God, have pity! Show me the way!

LOVING. (Furiously—as if he felt himself temporarily beaten) Coward!

JOHN. If I could only pray! If I could only believe again!

LOVING. You cannot! ...

JOHN. If I could only see the Cross again—

LOVING. (With a shudder) No! I don't want to see!  
(I, I, p. 146 ff.)

But John goes to the Cross and at its foot the final struggle takes place.

JOHN. I have come back to Thee!

LOVING. Words! There is nothing!

JOHN. Let me believe in Thy love again!

LOVING. You cannot believe!

JOHN. (Imploringly) O God of Love, hear my prayer!

LOVING. There is no God! There is only death!

JOHN. (More weakly now) Have pity on me! Let Elsa live!

LOVING. There is no pity! There is only scorn!

JOHN. Hear me while there is still time!

LOVING. Silence! But behind it I hear mocking laughter!

JOHN. No! O Son of Man, I am Thou and Thou art I! Why hast Thou forsaken me? O Brother that lived and loved and suffered and died for us, Who knoweth the tortured hearts of men, canst Thou not forgive—now—when I surrender all to Thee—when I have forgiven Thee—the love that Thou once took from me!

LOVING. No! Liar! I will never forgive!

JOHN. (... in a voice trembling with awakening hope and joy) Ah! Thou hast heard me at last! Thou hast not forsaken me! Thou hast always loved me! I am forgiven! I can forgive myself—through Thee! I can believe!

Once more the character of John Loving becomes an integrated whole; belief in God becomes the directing power in his life. The soul of Faust is redeemed and Loving, the Mephistopheles of the drama, as he slumps forward in death, cries out:

Thou hast conquered, Lord. Thou art—the End.  
Forgive—the damned soul—of John Loving!

Now like the song of Lazarus are the final lines of the play:

JOHN LOVING. (Exultedly) I know! Love lives forever!  
Death is dead! Ssahh! Listen! Do you hear?

FATHER BAIRD. Hear what, Jack?

JOHN LOVING. Life laughs with God's love again! Life  
laughs with love!

(IV, 2, p. 155 ff.)

## XIV CONCLUSION

This study reveals that O'Neill exposed his characters to a psychological analysis so that their natures were reduced to simple elements. Each motive is represented as based on some underlying psychological principle that incited the action; each emotion is explained as the result of certain psychic processes. In O'Neill's analysis of character he appears to have been influenced by one or another of the current schools of psychology. This statement does not imply that O'Neill was at all times a conscious follower of Freud or Jung or Adler or still another. It does maintain the thesis, however, that O'Neill was so great a student of human nature that he created characters that fit nicely into the innumerable molds cast by men who have devoted their lives to the study of human behavior. Whether their conclusions will become final truths is a question for the future; today their theories are interesting and challenging.

It may be argued that Shakespeare was a great student of the human mind; yet he knew nothing of the science of which O'Neill shows himself a master. Therefore, what does it prove, this analysis of O'Neill in relation to modern psychology? Let it be remembered that Shakespeare wrote in an age that was undisturbed by the questionings and doubts that grow out of Christian pietism and pagan hedonism, Fundamentalism and Modernism, the cult of the Overman and mechanistic neo-Darwinism, monogamy and polygamy, free love and birth control, the misrepresentation of Freud's teaching, and the discovery of the



**Subconscious Self.** Shakespeare's characters are simple in comparison to the complex beings that result from an age where integration of personality is difficult to achieve. A modern science has arisen which attempts a scientific explanation of these intricate natures. O'Neill as a literary exponent of the findings of psychology becomes an accurate recorder of the inner conflicts that destroy the harmony in man's lives.

It may also be charged that O'Neill sought to portray the abnormal rather than the normal nature of man. It may well be questioned whether this modern age is one in which many men can maintain a character that is satisfactorily integrated and thus truly normal. It is hardly an age in which unquestioned ideals and a definite, supreme goal can flourish. Patriotism is said to be an obstacle in the way of cosmopolitan idealism, religious faith is relegated to those whose emotions demand an illusion to live by, education is stamped as futile, justice is sometimes considered a mockery, and politics and business are marked by corruption. In such an age it is difficult to find a dominant ideal which develops a strong character. Conflicting motives arise in every man and fortunate is he whose well defined master-purpose can make of him a normal being. If a conflict is faced and resolved, man stands in little danger of disorder; nor is there danger of man's becoming the scene of serious enduring conflicts if the situation is an ordinary one which can be met by the average moral sentiments. But the situations that O'Neill presents are striking, not commonplace; yet they are entirely possible since they arise as a result of present conditions. In these situations he puts the man of today with his conflicting motives and lets him react as he will. If the result is disastrous, it is not because the character has been conceived as abnormal; it is

because the situation makes him so—a situation growing out of the materialistic age in which we live.

During the progress of this study, it was of deep interest to note what influence the different schools of psychology exerted over O'Neill as he developed in his study of human nature. In the early one-act plays, O'Neill is a mere amateur in a field where later he becomes a master. Such plays as 'Tis and Bound East for Cardiff show that he was aware of psychological problems which he later amplifies.

Already in the first of his long plays, Beyond the Horizon, O'Neill centers his attention on the study of newly defined psychological types. He must have known of Carl Jung's discovery of the introvert and extrovert, for his characters are drawn true to these types in every detail. This early play also points to the influence of another noteworthy psychologist, Alfred Adler. The Adlerian principle of man's "will to power" is admirably illustrated in the character of Ruth.

The influence of Adler on O'Neill is of no small importance. In play after play is to be found a glorification of the doctrine that sees in the ego strivings the chief motive for the conflict. Among the plays in which the "will to power" is the determining factor and the dominating element of life are "Anna Christie", The Hairy Ape, The Fountain, All God's Chillun Got Wings, "Marco Millions", and Lazarus Laughed. In some of these plays, in characters such as Ella and Caligula, the ego strivings fail to reach their goal and a neurosis results; in another play, in the character of Yank, a deep feeling of inferiority is the outcome; and in still other plays, in the characters of Marco Polo and Mat Burke, the ego is successful in establishing the superiority for which it has sought.

Great as is Adler's influence on O'Neill, even greater is that of Sigmund Freud. Freud stands opposite to Adler in his theory of personality. With Adler the ego is all-important; with Freud the sexual aims are the determinants of human destiny. It should be noted that sexuality is admitted by Freud to be an admixture of ego components. In plays such as Diff'rent, "The First Man", Desire Under the Stars, and Balded, many mental conditions are colored by Freudian implications—conditions growing out of suppression, sublimation, repression, the Narcissus complex, and regression. In Strange Interlude, Dynamo, and Mourning Becomes Electra, O'Neill sets forth the principles of Freud with such care that he becomes an unmistakable follower of the Austrian psychologist at this particular period of his career as dramatist.

Still another theorist who has strong influence on O'Neill is the above mentioned Carl Jung. Jung, like Adler, was a pupil of Freud, and, like Adler in another respect, broke away from the purely sexual theory of his master. He believes that the human problem contains another element which lies outside the sexual wish on the one hand, and the wish for power on the other. His theory concerns a life energy which transcends sex and includes all physiological and psychological processes. It is, however, Jung's theory of psychological types and his theory of the Unconscious processes that have the greatest influence on O'Neill. The former theory has already been mentioned as influencing his early work, but in the later plays the interest in personality types still claims the dramatist. By the Collective Unconscious, Jung indicates the sediment of all the experiences of the universe that have been in process of formation for untold ages. All this he believes to lie latent in the brain of man, influencing him in his dreams and fantasies. O'Neill must have been familiar with Jung's theory of the

unconscious forces in man when he wrote The Emperor Jones and Dynano. It is also probable that Jung influenced O'Neill when he was writing The Great God Brown, for Jung was the first psychologist to study the dual personality—which becomes the theme of this drama. X

Throughout this study an effort has been made to corroborate each character situation with citations from recognized authorities in that particular phase of psychology which is involved. The purpose of this procedure was not to prove that O'Neill consciously follows such authorities as Dr. Morton Prince, Gardner Murphy, William McDougall, Dr. Beatrice Minkie, Otto Weininger, or Dr. Bernard Hart, nor that he is even familiar with them; but to show that he understands the principles of psychology set forth by these scholars.

The theme of the O'Neill plays—man against the materialistic environment that has produced him—is written by a master who understands the difficult art of contrapuntal composition. However independent the melodies may be and at times discordant the tones, in the end the polyphony conforms with the laws of counterpoint and the result is a harmonious composition. Life, like music, has its pattern, and to this pattern O'Neill has made his characters conform according to their psychological constitution.

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\* This edition was not used for this particular play.

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## BIOGRAPHY

Vera Theresa Bahr received her early education in the public schools of Illinois, Montana, and South Dakota. In 1925 a certificate in music was granted her by the Progressive School of Music, Miles City, Montana. In 1926 she taught theory, harmony, and piano in the same conservatory. She continued her education at Stanford University, California, where, in 1930, she received the Bachelor of Arts degree. A year of graduate work at the same university led to the Master of Arts degree in 1931. From 1932 to 1936 she taught English, French, and German at the Black Hills Teachers' College, Spearfish, South Dakota. Since 1936 she has done graduate study in English at Louisiana State University.

## EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: **Vera Therese Kahn**

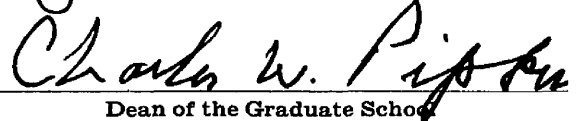
Major Field: **English**

Title of Thesis: **THE PLAYS OF HUGHES O'NEILL: A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS**

Approved:



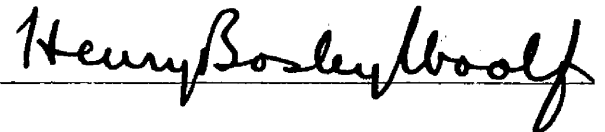
Major Professor and Chairman

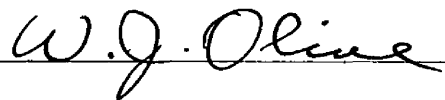


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### EXAMINING COMMITTEE:









Date of Examination:

**May 12, 1939**